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Wheildon - Siege of Boston - 1876

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SIEGE AND EVACUATION

— OF —

BOSTON AND CHARLESTOWN,

WITH A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF
PRE-REVOLUTIONARY PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

By WILLIAM W. WHEELDON.

With Illustrations and Map.

BOSTON:
LEE AND SHEPARD
1876.

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SIEGE AND EVACUATION

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OLD PORTRAIT OF GEN. GAGE, from Murray's Magazine, supposed 1776.

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"The enemy in Boston and on the heights of Charlestown, (two peninsulas surrounded in a manner by ships of war and floating batteries,) are so strongly fortified as to render it impossible to force their lines thrown up at the head of each Neck." [Washington's Letters.

— "they keep close on the two peninsulas of Boston and Charlestown, both of which are surrounded by ships of war and floating batteries." [Ibid.

"I consider the people of Massachusetts as very vigilant and steadfast guardians of American liberty." [Peyton Randolph.

— "if America were saved from impending danger, Massachusetts must be considered its guardian." [Citizens of Philadelphia.

"Never will my heart become insensible, till it is indifferent to all things, of the obligation I owe to the people of Massachusetts for the vigilance with which they have watched over, and the magnanimity with which they have maintained the liberties of the British colonies in America." [Dickinson, of Penn., author of the "Farmer's Letters."



SIEGE AND EVACUATION OF BOSTON.

INTRODUCTION.

THE first prominent event of the memorable historic year 1776, in Massachusetts, — which was then the field of the Revolutionary War, — was the EVACUATION OF BOSTON: the climax and end of the contest against that colony which the war was expressly intended to subdue and punish. This great achievement was accomplished by an improvised army of provincials against the ablest and most experienced soldiers in Europe, in a marked degree without bloodshed, and largely with arms, ammunition and supplies, captured from their enemies. It was in itself the legitimate conclusion of the events which preceded it: Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill, and was made compulsory at Dorchester Heights.


The immediate effect of the raid of the British troops upon Concord was to call the people of the province to arms, and more extensively to awaken the whole country to the true condition of things and the real purpose of the administration in Massachusetts. Whatever might have been the hope or expectations of the expedition, it was aggressive and bloody — it was war without its preliminary — and proved disastrous to the cause it was meant to subserve. It was the expression of the temper and purpose of the British king, the ministry and parliament; and made apparent to the people of all the colonies, not

merely the dangers to which they were alike exposed, but the immediate and absolute necessity of union and preparation.

To prevent a repetition of the outrages at Lexington and Concord was the purpose of the army, which it is true to say, gathered itself at Cambridge, on the 20th of April; and this purpose necessarily ripened into the determination, as Warren said, of "driving Gen. Gage and the British troops out of the country:" and this was accomplished.

There is no portion of the history of the American Revolution which includes more of interest or of importance than that connected with the Siege and Evacuation of Boston. In the brief period of eleven months the first provincial army was gathered together, afterwards disbanded, and a new army organized under the guns of the enemy; the union of the colonies cemented and made impregnable by the proceedings of a second and third Continental Congress; the army recognized and in all respects made continental; new Civil Governments formed in the colonies with and without regard to their colonial charters; the foundations laid for a national post office and a national navy, and above all, the country prepared for the DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

The following sketch of this period has been prepared chiefly from contemporay materials, such as, with small exception, have been open to previous writers. It will be found, however, to differ, immaterially perhaps, from most of them in conclusions, inferences or detail, in particulars of an essentially local character. The object has been to present, as briefly as possible, a plain, distinct narrative of the period, and to preserve the truth of history.



1775.

I. — THE SIEGE OF BOSTON.

ESTABLISHING AN ARMY.

BEFORE Lord Percy had ferried his disordered army across the river on the 20th of April, the nucleus of the besieging army (the minute-men of the Provincial Congress), upon the report of the blow which had been struck at Lexington and Concord, had collected at Cambridge, under command of Gen. Heath, afterwards of Gen. Ward ; and two days after, on the 23d, Congress

“*Resolved*, Unanimously, that it is necessary for the defence of the colony, that an army of thirty thousand men be immediately raised and established.

“*Resolved*, That thirteen thousand six hundred men be raised immediately by this province.”

Previously to this, however, on the 8th of April, Congress voted (103 to 96) in favor of “raising and establishing an army ;” and delegates were appointed to request “the New-England colonies and the continent to co-operate with us.” In response to this call, which was very earnestly pressed by the leading men of Massachusetts, Connecticut voted to raise six thousand troops ; New Hampshire, two thousand ; and Rhode Island, fifteen hundred.

From this time forward, as, in fact, Massachusetts had been doing for months, the measures of Congress, and the action of the Committees of Safety and Supply, were earnestly directed to preparation. The drum and fife, it is said, were heard everywhere ; and a martial spirit was the topic and lesson of the day. Troops were raised, organized, drilled, and, as far as possible, equipped ; and every effort was made for the collection of arms, ammunition, and military stores.

ROUSING THE “LIONS.” — MUST “COME TO BLOWS.”

Gen. Gage, after months of inactivity, had at last aroused “the lions,” as he had sarcastically called the

rebels, and had learned that they were not the cowards he had supposed. The Rev. Mr. Cook, at Menotomy, had said to his congregation, who were sitting in church, *with their guns in the pews*,

“There at present appears no other choice left us, but either tamely to sit down, and surrender our lives and properties, our wives and children, our religion and consciences, to the arbitrary will of others; or, trusting in God, to stand up in our own defence and of the British constitution.”

This was the universal conviction; and what had been done, and was still doing, was seen to be wise and prudent, and was soon after approved by the Continental Congress.

Seeing these movements and preparations, in May, Gage wrote to Lord Dartmouth, —

“They have been enlisting among the country people as many men as could be collected at forty shillings a man; and we are told that they are enlisting them in the other provinces. If they proceed in their movements, it seems impossible to be long before *we again come to blows*; and, from the beginning, I have perceived it was the wish and design of the leaders here to bring the rest of the colonies to support them. It is astonishing how they have duped the whole continent.”

COMMENCEMENT OF THE SIEGE.

Things now assumed everywhere all the aspects of war; and the New-England colonies had determined to meet it. It was said, “All suspense was now removed, and all delusion vanished.” It was seen that autocratic power was to be enforced at the point of the bayonet and the cannon’s mouth. The patriots did not shrink from the contest, and the people shew their readiness to support them by turning out in such numbers at the first outbreak.

It is said that there were twenty thousand people at Cambridge, soon after the 19th of April; and, at the end of fourteen days (thousands, of course, having returned

home, as no provision could be made for them), there remained an army of twelve thousand men, gathered from the New-England colonies, under Gen. ARTEMAS WARD; and now was commenced the SIEGE OF BOSTON.

CAPTURE OF TICONDEROGA.

Before another movement was made by Gen. Gage, some Connecticut gentlemen suggested following the example set by him, by seizing the munitions of war and military stores at Ticonderoga. This was quickly planned and expeditiously accomplished, on the 10th of May, by Col. Ethan Allen and Col. Benedict Arnold, with about two hundred and thirty "Green Mountain boys" (Vermont was not yet set off). The cannon obtained in this enterprise became invaluable to the American army in effecting the evacuation of Boston. Gen. Gage and Lord Dartmouth received intelligence of this event from a letter of Dr. Warren to John Scollay, dated May 17; a copy of which Gage sent to England.

FIRST EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS.

An exchange of prisoners, taken by each party on the 19th of April, was made at Charlestown, on the 6th of June, by Dr. Warren and Gen. Putnam for the Provincials, and Major Moncrief of the English army. The British prisoners comprised one major, two lieutenants, and six privates. The Americans exchanged were John Peck, James Hewes, James Brewer, and Daniel Preston of Boston, Samuel Frost and Seth Russell of Cambridge, Jos. Bell of Danvers, Elijah Seaver of Roxbury, and Cæsar Augustus (colored). The British privates were sent on board "The Lively," while Major Moncrief and the officers enjoyed a pleasant time at the house of Dr. Foster. After the exchange, the parties passed an hour or two together very agreeably.

II. — THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL.


TWO ENGAGEMENTS.

THE great central event in the *Revolutionary War in Massachusetts*, standing out prominently between the *Enforcement of the Port Act* and the *Evacuation of Boston*, — the product of one, and the parent of the other, — was the **BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL**. It was the culmination of the war of words between the parliament and the colony, the royal governors and the popular assemblies, the insolence of the soldiers and the indignation of the people, which had so long disturbed the good order and tranquillity of the colony.

There are various histories and accounts of the battle of Bunker Hill; and the materials are greater to day than ever before for arriving at just conclusions regarding it. We have already expressed the opinion, though the battle was the result of one movement and comprised one object, that there were *two engagements*,¹ one contemplated, the other spontaneous; viz., the **STORMING OF THE REDOUBT**, on Breed's Hill, by Pigot, Pitcairn, and Clinton against Prescott with a "handful of men," as Judge Prescott says; and the terrible conflict, army with army, — Howe and his officers against Putnam and Pomeroy, Knowlton, Stark, Reed, and others, — at the rail-fence, with not less than fifteen hundred men on each side, which was, correctly and accurately speaking, **THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL**. The testimony in support of this view, we do not hesitate to say, is cumulative and satisfactory.

The conclusions of the battle were not very satisfactory to either party: the British army gained nothing; the Provincial army, prestige and power, which were distinctly recognized by the enemy to the end of the war. The results were the recall of Gen. Gage, the establishment of the Continental army, and the Evacuation of Boston.

¹ See *New History of the Battle of Bunker Hill: its Purpose, Conduct, and Result*. By William W. Wheildon. Boston: Lee & Shepard, 1875.



III.—THE BESIEGING ARMY.

BOSTON AND CHARLESTOWN BESIEGED.

AT the close of the battle of Bunker Hill, the enemy occupied the two peninsulas of Boston and Charlestown; and both places were besieged by the colonial army.

The Provincial troops fell back upon the lines and works they had occupied, and, although from the several colonies, were tacitly under the command of Gen. Ward, who had with him, at this time, Gens. Pomeroy, Thomas, Heath, and Spencer of Massachusetts, Gen. Putnam and Col. Knowlton of Connecticut, Cols. Stark and Reed of New Hampshire, Gen. Greene, Cols. Varnum, Hitchcock and Church of Rhode Island, and others. Much progress had been made in the erection of defences intended to prevent any further expeditions into the country, until they had men, means, and powder enough to drive the enemy out of the town and colony.

THE CONTINENTAL ARMY.

Thus the army remained, until the arrival of Gen. Washington, on Sunday, the 2d of July. On the next day, with brief ceremony, and the reading of his commission (bearing date June 17, the day of the late battle) from the Continental Congress, the colonial forces were changed into a CONTINENTAL ARMY; and its purpose was the defence of the rights of the colonies, and, as Washington had expressed it, "the relief of Boston." On the *fourth of July, 1775*, it was officially announced by the commander-in-chief, that the colonial forces "are now the troops of the UNITED PROVINCES OF AMERICA."

Washington did not find an organized or disciplined army; but he did find, one week after his arrival, 16,770 men, and, as he wrote to Congress, "*a complete line of circumvallation from Charles River to Mystic River*;" and at Roxbury Neck he said, "Our people have intrenched across the outer end, and are strongly fortified there, and

on the hill by the meeting-house." He particularizes some of these defences as follows: "On the Charlestown Road, at the foot of Prospect Hill, another redoubt and strong fortification; then, on Prospect Hill, is Putnam's post, a very strong fortification; then, between that and Winter Hill, a strong citadel," &c.

All these, it will be remembered, including the battle of Bunker Hill, were the work of this rude and unorganized army in less than two and a half months; so that whatever Washington may have expected to find, or thought about "a mixed multitude of people under very little discipline, order, or government," the activity, energy, courage, and efficiency of the raw recruits, was not to be doubted or matched. It is true, the free sons of New England did not know much about discipline at this time: they had not learned much of it on the road from Lexington to Boston, nor at Bunker Hill; nor did they recognize the "great difference between officers and soldiers," afterwards so earnestly introduced; and it is as true now as it was then, that there is more equality among men, as men, in New England, than there ever was in Virginia, or elsewhere in the civilized world. Gordon says, "The freedom of which the New-Englanders have always been accustomed makes them impatient of control;" and he also says, "Discipline will not inspire cowards with courage; but it will make them fight." The army was not disciplined; but it was efficient.

Washington himself says, —

"It takes you two or three months to bring new men in any tolerable degree acquainted with their duty: it takes a longer time to bring *a people of the temper and genius of these into such a subordinate way of thinking as is necessary for a soldier.*" Hessians, for example.

ORGANIZING THE ARMY.


Gen. Washington was received with every courtesy and attention by the authorities and the people, and quarters provided for his use at Cambridge. He immediately sug-

gested to the Congress, then at Watertown, not to issue any more commissions, and earnestly occupied himself with the work of organizing the army. There was slight difficulty about the appointment of Putnam over Thomas; but this was soon reconciled; and that among the soldiers, who had not enlisted in a continental army nor accepted the regulations and pay now proposed, was also soon adjusted by the consideration and leniency of Gen. Washington, who felt that they were right. These being adjusted, there was no difficulty experienced in organizing the army, or transforming the rude recruits into prompt and obedient soldiers.

The army, after Adjutant-Gen. Gates had performed his efficient work, so that "every officer and private began to know his place and duty," was arranged into three grand divisions of two brigades each, — the first, or right, at Roxbury, under Major-Gen. Ward and Brig.-Gen. Thomas; the left at Prospect Hill, under Major-Gen. Lee, with Brigs. Sullivan and Greene; and the centre at Cambridge, under Major-Gen. Putnam and Brig.-Gen. Heath, with Gen. Washington at this point as commander-in-chief. There were, at this time, about 14,500 men fit for duty; and it is probably true, that, if arms and ammunition had been in their possession, Boston would have been evacuated by the British army before October. For want of these, the men were daily employed on the defences, living in camps made of boards, stone, turf, brick, brush, and canvas, presenting a varied and picturesque scene.

This condition of things, with more or less of incident and excitement, continued until the end of the year, when the time of enlistment with most of the men expired, and the disciplined army, so to speak, was literally dispersed, and had little to do with the final operations of the siege.

It is not at all to be wondered at, that Gen. Washington, at times, felt discouraged, not for the want of men, but for the want of means; and, for a time, things seemed to be getting worse and worse. In September, there was not a




dollar in the hands of the paymaster ; in October, powder was still wanting ; and the record was, " We daily undergo a cannonade." In November, Washington wrote, " We have been till this time enlisting about thirty-five hundred men ;" and on the 28th he wrote, " Our situation is terribly alarming." The old army did not re-enlist as expected ; but, on the 30th, Washington received intelligence by express, from Cape Ann, of the capture of the ordnance brig " Nancy," loaded with military stores. Things began to change for the better ; and, on the 13th December, they wore a better complexion : " The army is filling up ; the barracks go on well ; firewood comes in ; the soldiers are made comfortable and easy ; our privateers meet with success ;" and he exalts the condition of the lines as impregnable.

PROVIDING COATS FOR THE SOLDIERS.

On the 5th of July, the Provincial Congress adopted resolutions for furnishing each non-commissioned officer and soldier in the Massachusetts forces with a coat ; and thirteen thousand coats were ordered to be provided, proportioned upon all the towns according to the last Provincial tax ; to be delivered to the committee, without buttons, on or before the first day of October. The towns were to be allowed five shillings per yard for the cloth, and four shillings for making each coat. The following are some of the requisitions :—

Roxbury, 182 ; Dorchester, 96 ; Marblehead, 265 ; Salem, 380 ; Ipswich, 205 ; Lynn, 93 ; Newburyport, 183 ; Cambridge, 118 ; Concord, 73 ; Lexington, 49 ; Waltham, 44 ; Sudbury, 95 ; Lincoln, 44 ; Acton, 37 ; Springfield, 71 ; West Springfield, 72 ; Northampton, 81 ; Plymouth, 100 ; Bridgewater, 188 ; Middleborough, 160 ; Scituate, 125 ; Barnstable, 94 ; Dartmouth, 244 ; Taunton, 105 ; Rehoboth, 147 ; Worcester, 93 ; Lancaster, 116. Boston and Charlestown were excused from the contribution. The buttons were to have the number of the regiment stamped on the face of them.



IV. — NEW CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS.

THE most interesting and important civil act during the siege of Boston was the establishment of a new civil government for the colony; that of Gov. Gage, if it ever had any thing more than a pretentious existence, having expired. The subject was first presented by the Provincial Congress to the Continental Congress, at its second session (May 16), the former saying, "We tremble at having an army, although consisting of our own countrymen, established here, without a civil power to provide for and control them." Congress at once passed a resolve (June 9), declaring "that, no obedience being due to the act of parliament for altering the charter, &c., nor to a governor or lieutenant-governor who will not observe the directions of, but endeavor to subvert, the charter, the governor and lieutenant-governor of that colony are to be considered as absent, and their offices vacant," and recommending the choice of representatives to a general assembly, election of councilors, &c., according to the charter, "until a governor of his Majesty's appointment will consent to govern the colony according to its charter."

On the 20th, the Provincial Congress addressed a circular to the towns, requesting the selectmen to call meetings of their inhabitants for the election of one or more deputies to represent them in the General Assembly, to meet on Wednesday, the 19th of July, at Watertown.

BOSTON TOWN-MEETINGS.

On the 5th of July, the Congress at Watertown passed a resolve, that as "the people of Boston are dispersed through the State, and a legal town-meeting in the ordinary way is utterly impracticable," the town clerk was authorized to issue notifications in the newspapers to freeholders and others, qualified according to law to vote for representatives in 1774, to assemble at the meeting-house IN CON-

CORD, on Tuesday, 18th of July, at three o'clock, P.M., to elect representatives to represent them in the General Court to be held at Watertown, on Wednesday, 19th inst., at nine o'clock; and the meeting was accordingly held.

Samuel Adams, John Hancock (who was then president of the Continental Congress), Dr. Benjamin Church, and Mr. John Pitts were chosen.

The defection and imprisonment of Dr. Church creating a vacancy in the delegation, another town-meeting was held at Watertown, 28th November, at which William Cooper was chosen representative.

DISSOLUTION OF CONGRESS — ORGANIZING THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Having completed its business in providing for the establishment of civil government in the colony according to the charter, and having done every thing in the way of raising men, means, supplies of all kinds, ammunition, &c., for the army, the Provincial Congress, which first met at Concord on the 11th of October, 1774, closed its labors on the 19th of July, and was immediately succeeded by the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF MASSACHUSETTS. Hon. James Warren of Plymouth (brother of Dr. Warren), was chosen speaker; and Samuel Freeman, clerk. This body included two hundred and five members. The first election sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Gordon.

To complete the civil government, on Friday, 21st, the House of Representatives elected twenty-eight councillors, — eighteen for Massachusetts Bay, four for New Plymouth, three for the Province of Maine, one for the territory between Sagadahock and Nova Scotia, and two at large.

The two Adamses, Hancock, Bowdoin, Robert Treat Paine, James Otis, Cushings, Palmer, Winthrop, and Lincoln were among the members of the Council, several of whom were also members of the House. This Council continued to discharge the office of Governor of the Province, until the adoption of the Constitution, and the election of JOHN HANCOCK as governor in 1780.

"DAYBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION."

In November, Congress recommended the Provinces of New Hampshire and South Carolina to "establish a form of government as will produce the happiness of the people." And "here," says Bancroft, "was indeed the day-break of the Revolution: two peoples were summoned to come together and create governments with a single view to their own happiness."

The remark seems to ignore the fact that Massachusetts had for a year been under the government of her own Provincial Congress, and for three months under a legislature elected by the people, according to her charter. In point of fact, Gen. Gage was not for an hour governor of the colony.

V.—INCIDENTS OF THE SIEGE.**ARRIVAL OF SOUTHERN RIFLEMEN.**

ONE of the companies of riflemen ordered by Congress from Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, on the 14th of June, arrived at Cambridge, 25th July, from Pennsylvania; the other companies, on 5th and 7th of August, in less than two months. At first, these men were very useful in "picking off the regulars," and became quite notorious; but Gen. Thomas, two months later (Oct. 24), "complained of many of the Southern riflemen, that they often deserted to the enemy, were mutinous, repugnant to all kind of duty, and so exceedingly vicious, that the army would be as well off without them." They never entered Boston, as Gen. Washington sent them to New York with the first detachment of the army.

SKIRMISHES AND EXPEDITIONS.

Some of the most striking incidents of the siege, before and after the arrival of Washington, were the expeditions to the islands in the harbor, and the skirmishes with the enemy. The first of these was that under Gen. Putnam, on Noddle's Island, 27th, 29th, and 30th of May, in which he burned every house, barn, corn-house, store-house, &c., and their contents, on the island, and captured more than a

thousand animals, — sheep, cattle, and horses; all of which otherwise would have fallen to the use of Gen. Gage. Putnam had six hundred men, and was accompanied by Dr. Warren, who was so active with Gen. Heath on the 19th of April, and who really seems to have been everywhere. Gage sent several hundred marines and an armed schooner against them; but Putnam got the best of them, and finally burnt the schooner. The island was desolated, and the occupant ruined; left, as he said, “stripped almost naked, and destitute of any place to lay his head,” with a family of between forty and fifty children and servants dependent upon him. He petitioned Congress for relief; but that body was too busy at this time to attend to him.

The next day (31st), Col. Robinson took five hundred and thirty sheep and cattle from Pettick’s Island; and June 2, Greateon took eight hundred from Deer Island. These were some of the sufferings of the Tories.

July 8, skirmish at Boston Neck, buildings burnt, six muskets captured. 11th, guard driven in, and store burned; same day, party to Long Island, fifteen prisoners, two hundred sheep and cattle, thirteen horses, &c. 12th, again to Long Island; hay and barns burned. 18th, British cannonading upon Roxbury.

July 19th, lighthouse burnt. 20th, Fast Day; work suspended. 31st, party rebuilding lighthouse attacked under Major Tappan, works demolished, fifteen of the enemy killed, twenty-five marines and seven Tories prisoners, without loss of a man.

In August, Gage sent some foraging-vessels to Connecticut for the supply of his army: they returned with eighteen hundred sheep, a hundred cattle, which he said “will be some relief to the troops in general, and of great benefit to the hospitals.” The bells of the town were rung in token of the event; and a British poet celebrated the success of the General in rhyme: —


“In days of yore, the British troops
Have taken warlike kings in battle:
But now, alas! their valor droops;
For Gage takes nought but — harmless cattle”

CHANGE OF COMMANDERS.

As soon as the news of the battle of Bunker Hill reached England, — which it may well be supposed astounded the ministry, and aroused the temper of the king, — the recall of Gen. Gage was determined upon; and the plans intended for his future operations were ordered to be turned over to Gen. Howe, who was then (September, 1775) in garrison on Bunker Hill.

Gen. Gage immediately prepared for his departure, and was soon overwhelmed with the praises and laudations of the Tories; while the soldiers condemned him in somewhat disrespectful terms. He is generally thought to have been an amiable man, and, having married a New Jersey lady, was rather desirous of befriending the country. He at first, no doubt, honestly thought he could pacify the people of Boston, and relied upon the Tories to crush “the faction.” The results of the town-meeting of the 17th of June, 1774 (and its adjournment), in Boston, were hardly less discouraging to him than were the results of the 17th of June at Bunker Hill. So favorable to him had been his reception, so hopeful and confident the assertions of the Tories, and so crushing had the Port Act proved, that, at this meeting, he and the Tories expected a triumph. They were defeated and disappointed.

After the experience he had had at Concord, Lexington, and Bunker Hill, he felt very uneasy, and certainly realized that his mission was a failure. He had accomplished nothing towards “absolute submission,” and was a disappointed man; had underrated the Americans, and overrated himself. We doubt if he had seen a happy day since his landing, when he found the people in such excellent humor at the riddance of his predecessor. The Tories, after they had shown their imbecility, fastened themselves upon him, and were a burden to his government. He sailed for England 10th of October. Horace Walpole wrote, “Poor Gage is to be the scapegoat for what was a reason against employing him, — incapacity.” But neither Howe or Burgoyne did any better.




COLONIAL PRIVATEERING.

The subject of fitting out vessels to operate against the British as a colonial navy, or as privateers, was before the Provincial Congress, in June, 1775; but nothing definite was done at that time. A month previously, two provincial sloops had been captured by the enemy, and were recaptured by the people of New Bedford. Rhode Island authorized two privateers; and Connecticut followed the example, for Gage's vessels were foraging on the coast for supplies for his army. Washington was in want of powder; and privateers were sent to Bermuda and other places to obtain it.

A large number of vessels were employed in privateering; and, in fact, it continued all through the war. Numerous vessels were captured; the particulars of which it would take a volume to record. The captures made were very valuable to the Provincials, some of them especially so, and profitable to those engaged in the business. One of the most valuable vessels captured was the ordnance brig "*Nancy*" (Nov. 29), which furnished the army with two thousand muskets, thirty thousand rounds of shot, thirty tons musket-shot, eleven mortars, and a hundred thousand gun-flints. It was said, "Had Congress sent an order for articles most wanted, they could not have made a more satisfactory invoice." There was great rejoicing; and, when one of the large mortars was safely in place at Cobble Hill, Gen. Putnam mounted it, and christened it with a bottle of *rum*; while Col. Mifflin named it the CONGRESS. When it came to be used in cannonading Boston, to commemorate the 5th of March, as it was said, it burst on the third fire.

An officer under the Provincial Congress, who "took off his leather apron, and laid aside his speckled shirt," when the troubles began, entered into the privateering business. "Knowing," he says, "that the part I had taken would admit of no retreat, nor compromise with the enemy, should they succeed, and hanging largely sustained the threats of my own countrymen, the gibbets, halters, &c., I was



resolved to exert every nerve to distress the enemy, and recover the damages they had so wantonly done me." In a short time, the writer of this account says, "I owned, in cruisers, prizes, and trading-vessels, to the amount of about thirty or forty sail;" and it is to be hoped got fully remunerated for the loss of his property in the burning of Charlestown.

CONTINENTAL NAVY.

The movement in favor of establishing a navy was suggested to Congress by Rhode Island, in October, 1775. This little colony, two days ahead of Massachusetts, elected the first delegates to the Continental Congress, and furnished to the American navy its first commodore, ESEK HOPKINS. The proposition for a navy was supported by Sam Adams, and was carried through Congress by his great colleague, John Adams. In December, a plan was reported for fitting out *thirteen* ships of twenty-four and thirty-two guns each, to be got ready — of course — in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. Hopkins was appointed Dec. 22, 1775, and sailed with his fleet from the Delaware, early in February following, with two ships, two brigs, and a sloop. He pursued Lord Dunmore's fleet on the coast of Virginia, obtained vast amounts of supplies for the army from Bermuda, and had a number of engagements with the enemy. He was dismissed by Congress for not confining his attention to the "enemy's ships upon the coasts of the Southern States." John Paul Jones was afterwards in command of some of the continental ships, though not as commodore. March 23, Congress permitted privateering "upon the enemies of the United Colonies."

VI. — INCIDENTS IN THE TOWN.

POPULATION OF BOSTON.

□ IN July, the number of inhabitants in Boston was less than seven thousand, and of troops about thirteen thou-

sand. Fresh provisions were not to be had, and the people and soldiers were distressed and sickly. Rum was plenty and cheap, and could not be kept from the soldiers. Salt pork and fish were almost the only provisions to be had. Martial law had been proclaimed in June; and the patriotic portion of the people were insulted, persecuted and abused.

DESTROYING THE LIBERTY TREE.

At this time, the famous Liberty Tree, which stood nearly opposite Boylston Market, was cut down; prominent persons were sent to prison on false charges; while the poor were shipped from the town, and what property or furniture they had, subjected to plunder. A spectator wrote the following lines on the fall of the LIBERTY TREE:—

“Swift as the wind, to vent their base-born rage,
The Tory Williams and the butcher Gage
Rushed to the tree, a nameless number near,
Tories and negroes following in the rear:
Each, axe in hand, attacked the honored tree,
Swearing eternal war with liberty;
Nor ceased their strokes till each repeated wound
Tumbled its honors headlong to the ground.”

DISCIPLINE IN THE ARMY.

Gen. Gage, it is said, was not very popular with the soldiers, nor yet with the people, excepting the Tories, whom he could not shake off. The discipline in the army, at times, if not constantly, was deemed very severe, especially on account of numerous desertions. An attempt was made to get a soldier reprieved who was taken at the Neck, attempting to desert (December, 1774); but he was shot a few days after, when the men expressed their discontent. They said, “If the general had the right to send his body to the grave, he had no right to send his soul to the Devil; for he had his death-warrant only eleven days before he was executed.”

Andrews relates the following story. He says, It is shocking to conceive to what degree the soldiers are pun-

ished: it is imagined half their deaths arise from it. A drummer in the Tenth Regiment, more humane than the rest, refused to take his turn at the whip, and flung it on the ground, saying that he enlisted to serve his Majesty as a drummer, and thought he was as capable and faithful as any in the regiment; but he never entered the service to become a whipper or a hangman, and would not do it. He was arrested, tried by court-martial, and honorably acquitted.

GOVERNOR GAGE AND THE BOYS.

“Shall close this by giving you a small anecdote relating to some of our school-lads, who, as formerly, at this season, improved the coast from Sherburn’s Hill down to School Street. Gen. Haldiman improving the house that belongs to old Cook, his servant took it upon him to cut up their coast, and fling ashes upon it. The lads made a muster, chose a committee to wait upon the general, who admitted them, and heard their complaint, which was couched in very genteel terms, complaining that their fathers before them had improved it as a coast for time immemorial, &c. He ordered his servant to repair the damage, and acquainted the Governor with the affair, who observed that it was impossible to beat the notion of liberty out of the people, as it was rooted in them *from their childhood*.” — ANDREW’S *Letters*.

FISHING IN THE HARBOR.

One of the diarists in Boston during the siege said they had pork and beans one day, and beans and pork the next, and *fish when they could get it*, as even fishing was not allowed. The following is the form of the fishing-pass:—

Fishing Pass.

[SEAL.]

Wm. Colfleat,

Edm'd Saunders,

Thos. Maples.

To

The Commanders
of His Majesty's Ships
at Boston.

By Samuel Graves, Esq., Vice

Admiral of the White, &c.

The three men named in the margin
are hereby allowed to fish in an
open Boat with Liberty to get their
Bait at Governor's Island.

Dated at Boston, 15th

September, 1775.

SAM'L GRAVES.

SHOOTING AT THE TARGET.



Andrews tells a story of a countryman who laughed as he was passing "the bottom of the Common" to see a regiment of soldiers *trying to hit a target*. The officer wanted *he* should try. He loaded the gun, and hit the target three times just where the officer told him. The officer and soldiers stared, and thought the devil was in the man. "Why," says the countryman, "I'll tell you *naow*: I have got a boy at home that will toss up an apple, and shoot out all the seeds as it's coming down!"

"DESECRATED BY BRITISH TROOPS, 1775-76."

This inscription is borne upon the tablet in the front of the tower of the Old South Church as it stands to-day. Its desecration is announced in a letter from Boston, Oct. 19. "Our works are daily increasing: we are now erecting redoubts on the eminences on Boston Common; *and a meeting-house, where sedition has been often preached, is clearing out to be made a riding-house for the light dragoons.*" The galleries were used for refreshment-rooms and the accommodation of spectators.

An offer was made by the people to erect a house for the dragoons at less cost than the alterations in the church, but the offer was declined; and the best pew, carved and lined with silk, was carried to John Amory's house, and used for a hog-sty. These dragoons were a very expensive article otherwise, and, it is believed, for nearly a year, never went outside the garrison.

Several other churches were desecrated (excepting those of the Episcopal denomination). Brattle-street and Hollis-street churches were used as barracks; the Old North, and part of the West Church, for timber and fuel. [The shot which struck Brattle-street Church, and which was inserted in the front wall over the entrance, was fired from Cambridge, most likely from Cobble Hill near where the Asylum for the Insane now stands.]

TAR AND FEATHERS.

One of the most remarkable cases of tar and feathers that ever occurred in Boston, took place on the 9th of March, a year before evacuation, on the person of Thomas Ditson, jun., of Billerica, who had been bargaining with some soldiers for some cast-off clothing and a rusty gun. He was taken to the guard-house on Foster's Wharf, and kept there over night. The next morning, at seven o'clock, he was ordered to strip, when they tarred and feathered him all over, breeches and all. They tied a paper around his neck, "American liberty, or democracy exemplified," &c. He was then fastened into a chair, put upon trucks; and then about fifty soldiers and officers, as he says, with drum and fife, marched up the wharf, up King Street, down Fore Street, through Main Street, passing the governor's house, to the Liberty Tree, up Frog Lane (Boylston Street), where they let him go free.

The selectmen of Billerica presented the matter to the Provincial Congress, and sent a remonstrance to Gen. Gage. An exciseman who was tarred and feathered in America got a pension of two hundred pounds per annum on his return to England.

TORY SOLDIERS.

In November, as we learn from Gen. Howe's orderly-book, three companies of Loyalists were formed in Boston, "for the defence of the place," and placed under the command of Brig.-Gen. Timothy Ruggles, and called "*Loyal American Associators*." They were distinguished, says the order, "by a white sash around the left arm." In December, another company of "*Loyal Irish Volunteers*" was formed; but it is supposed that most of these volunteers were foreign born, and really were not of much account. They were put on guard-duty; and it is a little doubtful if the regular army had any fancy for them. They probably went to Halifax as plain Tories.

VII. — THE WINTER OF 1775-76.

BRITISH ARMY IN BOSTON.

[THE winter of 1775-76 in Boston and in the American camps is a whole history, and one of suffering and distress almost without compensation to either party. Chapters would be required to give the particulars. The condition of the British army was deplorable enough; and it is curious that Lord Dartmouth, who was going to punish the Bostonians so terribly, should be able to give the most accurate description of it in so few words. "Cooped up in a town, deprived of the comforts and necessities of life, wasting away by disease and desertion faster than we can recruit," and, he added, "liable to surprise, and no longer the object of terror to the rebels." It was all this, and even more; and, what was deemed still worse, they could not get away. The small-pox was raging fearfully; provisions were scarce and high; the army in want of food, clothing, and fuel. They had seven hundred horses to take care of and feed, and the least possible need or use for most of them; and hay was scarcer than fuel, and at the price of a hundred dollars per ton. During this winter, an English account says fresh fish was one shilling sterling per pound; apples, five dollars per barrel; eggs, four shillings per dozen; fresh meat, fifteen pence per pound. "Horse-flesh has been eaten for some time."

The idea of keeping the inhabitants in the town "as hostages" had long been abandoned, and now the desire was to get rid of them; and Howe did get rid of hundreds of them by landing them on the shores of the harbor in mid-winter, to be taken care of by the Provincials, and, as he probably desired, communicate the small-pox to them. Three hundred were landed at Chelsea, and seven hundred (men, women, and children) at Point Shirley. The legislature provided for some of them by hiring the almshouse at Salem.

Washington wrote, "They are pulling down the houses


in Boston as fast as possible" for fuel; and, at another time, "The small-pox is in every part of Boston, and is considered as a security against any attempt of ours." Thieving and plundering prevailed, and Gen. Howe could not stop it. Only seven hundred soldiers were left in the garrison at Charlestown, and these were occasionally changed. The royal navy probably suffered much less than the army, and shared less in the vices which prevailed in the camp.

The resources of the British officers were not very numerous or attractive. They visited exclusively among the Tories and themselves, and had frequent disagreeable interludes with the people. Skating at Jamaica Pond, although sometimes rather "cold comfort," was one of their luxuries.

MAJOR KNOWLTON AND THE DRAMA.

Notwithstanding the great sickness which prevailed in the garrison at Boston, there were balls, assemblies, and theatrical performances, none of which, however, were approved by Gen. Gage. The disturbance of one of these latter performances has been rendered notorious by Major Knowlton's assault upon the few remaining houses at Charlestown (Jan. 8) which were used by the British sentries. Rev. Mr. Gordon gives a brief account of the fright which occurred in Faneuil Hall. "They had just finished attending 'The Busybody,' and were about to commence the farce entitled 'The Blockade of Boston.' The Gen. Washington of the evening appeared with a large wig, long rusty sword, and his orderly with a rusty gun, seven feet long, when a regular sergeant rushed upon the stage, and cried out, 'The Yankees are attacking Bunker Hill.' This was by many supposed to be a part of the play; but when the alarm officers were ordered to their posts. Instead of mirth and laughing, there was shrieking, crying, and fainting. Major Knowlton burnt the houses, killed one man, and brought off five prisoners."

Speaking of the "Blockade of Boston," the Liverpool



(Eng.) "Evening Post," in November, 1775, published the following card:—

" May the Ministerial Blockheads be Blocked,
and
The Ports they've Blockaded be Unblocked."

SUPPLIES SENT FROM ENGLAND.

An effort was made in November, by the British ministry, to supply their army in Boston with food, whatever it might cost. The truth is, they had too long trusted to its ability *to supply itself*. This was the cause of their sufferings. England meant that the colony should feed her army; and the army suffered not only for food, but in character, for its inefficiency in not being able to provide for itself. At last, when it was found the army could not do this, the ministry shipped five thousand oxen, fourteen thousand sheep, great numbers of hogs, ten thousand butts of beer, five thousand chaldrons of coal, immense quantities of vegetables, hay, oats, beans, &c., for Boston. A very small portion of all this—owing to delays, storms at sea (in which many vessels were lost), the dying of the animals, decaying of the vegetables, and, in addition to all these, the activity of the privateersmen—ever reached the British army at Boston, and only added to the enormous expenses and losses already chargeable to the occupation of that devoted town.

INHABITANTS OF BOSTON.

The inhabitants of Boston suffered almost as much, and some of them more, than the soldiers. They were poor, distressed, sick, and, but for the donations of the country sent to Boston, must have starved. The selectmen of the town, the neighboring towns (in which thousands of poor were domiciled), the patriotic and humane everywhere, and the house of representatives, did every thing that could be done for their relief. Merchants and persons of the better classes, who staid in town to protect their property, had hard work to do this, and were liable to constant insults in

the streets, and robberies or fires at night. Provisions were not only dear, but fresh meats were not to be had. Old Put sent Gage a quarter of fresh veal, for which he received thanks; but he did not send any to Gen. Howe, whose needs were greater. With many, it was just what they could get day after day, salt fish or salt meat, pork and beans or beans and pork; but when Mr. Newell says, "Two gentlemen invited him to dine on *rats*," it is probable there was "a mice in the meal," or, at least, a bit of sarcasm.

IN THE AMERICAN CAMPS.

Washington had trouble enough with organizing the army, disbanding it, and gaining another; but he was still more annoyed and delayed in his operations for want of means and ammunition, and, after these, for barracks, blankets, fuel, and provisions. Things in these respects, however, were nearly all right before the severe cold weather came on, though Gen. Greene wrote in December, that "many regiments had to eat their provisions raw for want of fuel to cook it with," — a statement which, we think, is only partially true, and that perhaps, only for a single day. The fences, forest-trees, fruit-trees, and orchards, for a mile around the camp, had been cut down and burned, to the great damage of the people in after years; but still fuel was to be had.

On the 2d of December, the legislature took measures to remedy this deficiency. The neighboring towns were required to deliver at camp a specified number of cords of wood per day: Roxbury, Dedham, Milton, and Dorchester, three cords per day to Roxbury camp; Lexington, five; Bedford, four; Lincoln, three and a half to Prospect Hill; Newton and Weston, six; Needham, five; Waltham, four; Concord and Natick, three, to Cambridge. Some of these orders were afterwards changed, and others issued. Similar orders were issued for a supply of hay to the camps.

As a general thing, notwithstanding some occasional

deficiencies, the American army was well supplied with provisions from the surrounding country. The cattle, by an order of Congress, had been mostly driven from the sea-coast to the interior to keep them from the enemy.

The men were allowed fresh beef two days in the week, salt meat four days, salt fish one day, with peas, beans, rice, butter or lard, meal, molasses, bread or a pound of flour, per day per man, spruce beer, &c.

There were many captures by privateers; and large amounts of supplies, provisions as well as military stores, were obtained for the army. The success of the privateers was such, that, for a time, it superseded legitimate commerce. Gen. Howe was finally obliged to recommend to Lord Dartmouth that supplies for his army should be sent out in ships-of-war.

Spring was looked for with great interest, although it was well known that it would bring any thing but peace to either party.

VIII. — ARMY AND FORTIFICATIONS.

STATE OF THE ARMY DURING THE SIEGE.

THE Colonial army, when it changed its character and became the Continental army (July 3, 1775), numbered 16,770 men, and were encamped around Boston; and their number continued for some time to increase, until it numbered nearly 20,000. Between November of this year, and February, 1776, this army was mostly disbanded, and a new army raised, by the persistent efforts of Congress and the towns.

In December, 1775, the army numbered 15,786. On the 14th of January, Washington himself reports 10,400 men "on paper;" the time of enlistment of the men having expired. The army, while undergoing these changes, had been in the field nearly a year, mostly occupied in building fortifications, and learning the drill. Poorly supplied, badly quartered, not at all accustomed to military life, there is no great reason to wonder that they wanted to go

home when the time for which they enlisted had expired ; yet some of them, as the general says, "promised to continue out the month."

February 4, the army numbered 11,618 ; and, previous to this time, the council of war called for thirteen regiments before the 1st of February, and Gordon says the militia "collected apace ; but the want of arms was prodigious." Nevertheless, Gen. Howe had not dared to leave his garrisons (his troops being divided), although Washington believed he knew his situation.

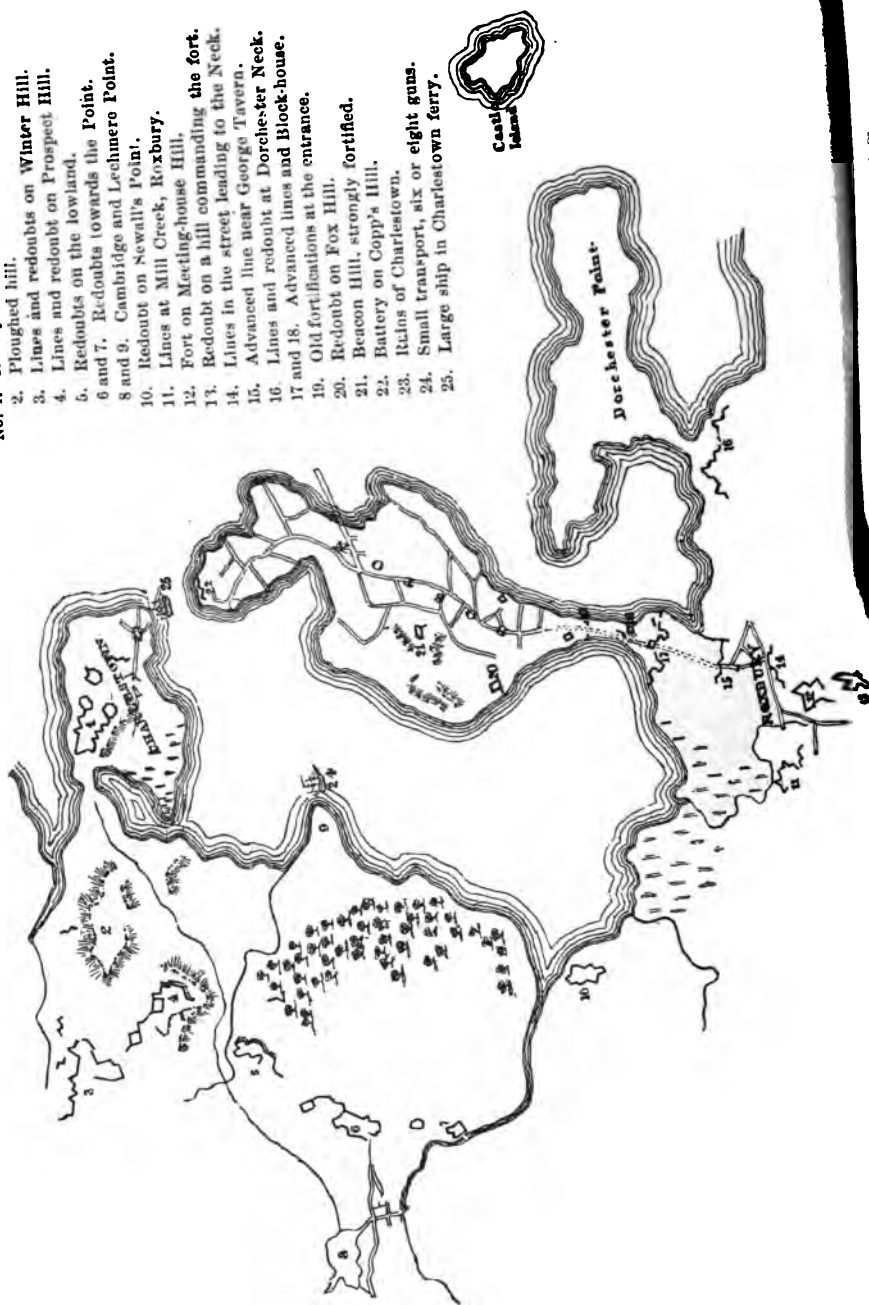
Before the month expired, by the exertions of the Colonial authorities, the number of troops reached, on the 18th of February, to over 17,000, and, on the 25th, to 18,276. This was the army that effected the evacuation of Boston, for which the previous army had prepared the way ; and this was the army, that, a month later, marched for the protection of New York.

OFFICIAL RETURN.

The official return of March 9 was as follows :—

Commissioned officers and staff . . .	1,245
Non-commissioned officers . . .	1,535
Present fit for duty	14,232
Sick present	2,445
Sick absent	330
On furlough	29
On command	1,374
Total	18,410
Artillery	6,640
Militia of Massachusetts	6,838

- NO. 1. Ploughed hill.
2. Lines and redoubts on Winter Hill.
 3. Lines and redoubt on Prospect Hill.
 4. Redoubts on the lowland.
 5. Redoubts towards the Point.
 - 6 and 7. Redoubts towards the Point.
 - 8 and 9. Cambridge and Lechmere Point.
 10. Redoubt on Sewall's Point.
 11. Lines at Mill Creek, Roxbury.
 12. Fort on Meeting-house Hill.
 13. Redoubt on a hill commanding the fort.
 14. Lines in the street leading to the Neck.
 15. Advanced line near George Tavern.
 16. Lines and redoubt at Dorchester Neck.
 - 17 and 18. Advanced lines and Block-house.
 19. Old fortifications at the entrance.
 20. Redoubt on Fox Hill.
 21. Beacon Hill, strongly fortified.
 22. Battery on Copp's Hill.
 23. Ruins of Charlestown.
 24. Small transport, six or eight guns.
 25. Large ship in Charlestown ferry.



FORTIFICATIONS ON BOSTON NECK.

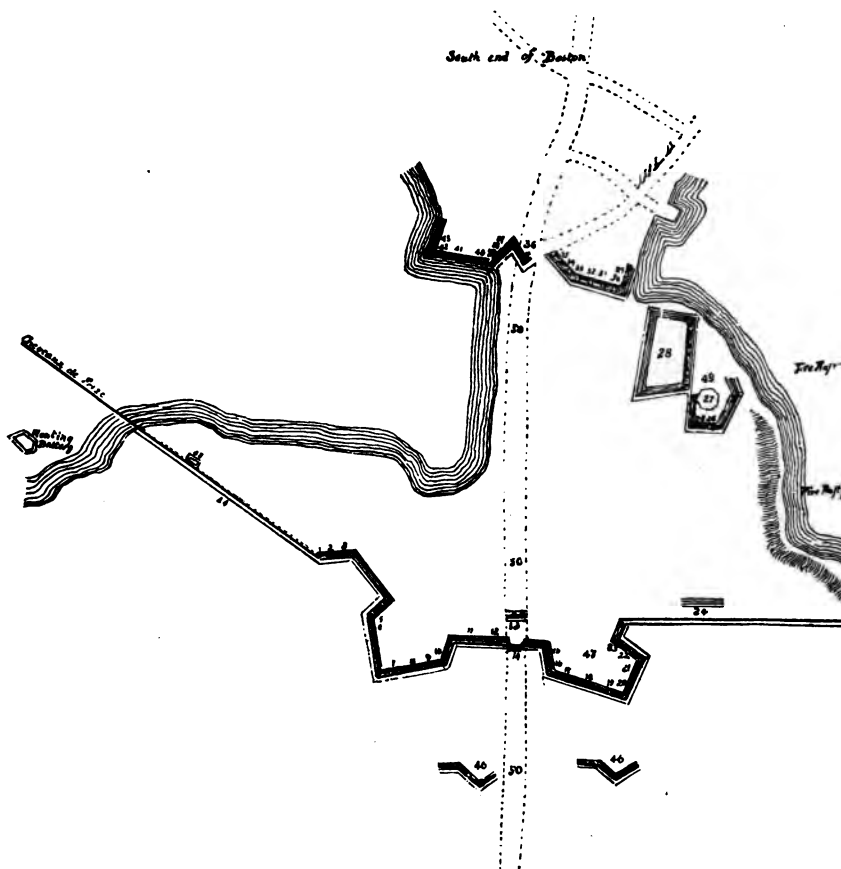
One of the earliest and most annoying of Gen. Gage's acts in the town was the erection of fortifications across Boston Neck, — a measure originally adopted at a very early period by the first settlers on the peninsula, as a protection against the Indians. The inhabitants of Boston remonstrated against them; the County Convention remonstrated; and the Provincial Congress remonstrated; and each of these parties sent a committee with their remonstrance. Finally the Continental Congress took the matter into consideration, and addressed Gen. Gage upon the subject; but all this without effect. Gen. Gage deemed the works necessary to the safety of his Majesty's troops, and persisted in the assertion that they were of peaceful character, and would neither obstruct communication with the town, or annoy the people. But still their purpose was to overawe the people; and, after the events of the 19th of April, they were a regular guard-house, obstructing intercourse and business, and restraining the inhabitants. Day by day, the works were strengthened, and day by day, they became more annoying and troublesome; and, finally, they absolutely imprisoned the people, so that they could hardly escape from the town, through its gate and over its draw-bridge, under any circumstances.

The works, as finally accomplished, were remarkable for extent and strength, reaching from bay to bay. The main works were just within the line of Roxbury, with blinds beyond, on each side of the street, with forty men. The forts were projected in angles, supplied with cannon and a bomb-battery between them.

On the westerly side, there were five 24-pounders with 100 shot each, four 12-pounders with 60 to 80 shot each, three 6-pounders with 100 shot each; on the east side, three 24-pounders and two 6-pounders with 100 shot each, two 6-pounders and a 9-pounder with 45 shot; making in these forts twenty guns, besides the battery. On each side of these a picket-fence extended to the water, with *chevaux-*

de-frise and floating battery on the west side, and two fire-rafts on the east side.

Falling back from these formidable fortifications to the narrowest part of the Neck, near the present location of Dover Street, there were forts on each side of the street, extending to the water, and mounting fourteen cannon with 60 shot each. Outside of these were other forts with two 9-pounders, 45 shot each; ten light 24-pounders with 600 shot, and a blockhouse with six howitzers. These were the works upon which Gen. Howe relied for his security in the town.



The numbers in the engraving refer exclusively to the armament as stated in the text.

1776.

IX. — PROGRESS OF THE SIEGE.

A CONTINENTAL FLAG.

It has been said, and we presume correctly, that, at the battle of Bunker Hill, there was neither flag or music on either side: of course, the Provincials would not have had either. There were colony flags of different descriptions; the prominent one among the Massachusetts soldiers being the Pine Tree Flag, which was more or less in use for many years. On the 1st of January, 1775, "the day which gave being to the new army," as Washington wrote, "we had hoisted the Union Flag in compliment to the United Colonies." Bancroft describes it as the "tri-colored American banner, not yet spangled with stars, but showing thirteen stripes of alternate red and white in the field, and the united red and white crosses of St. George and St. Andrew on a blue ground in the corner."

The new army at this time consisted of less than ten thousand men, and this included some who would soon leave. Washington was very uneasy: "How it will end God in his great goodness will direct," "I wish this month was well over our heads." "I have scarcely immersed from one difficulty, before I have plunged into another," and have been told so many things that did not come to pass "that I distrust every thing." Two weeks later, he seemed still more discouraged: "We are now without money in our treasury, powder in our magazines, arms in our stores."

RECEPTION OF A TRAIN OF ARTILLERY.

In November, Col. Henry Knox of Boston, having volunteered, went to New York, and thence to Ticonderoga, under instructions from Gen. Washington to procure necessities for the army. He was to get whatever he could in New York, and then "go to Major-Gen. Schuyler, and get the remainder from Ticonderoga, Crown Point and St.

Johns, and Quebec, if necessary and in our hands." "The want of them is so great," Washington wrote, "that no trouble or expense must be spared to obtain them."

On the 17th of December, Knox wrote from Fort George — where the cannon had been stored, by order of Congress, until "they may be safely returned, upon the restoration of former harmony" — as follows: —

"I hope, in sixteen, or seventeen days, to present to your Excellency a noble train of artillery, the inventory of which I have enclosed."

Col. Knox built forty-two sleds, and, with eighty-four yoke of oxen, transported the cannon over lakes and rivers, and through the deep snows, and reached Framingham on 24th of January, where John Adams, on his way to Philadelphia, had an opportunity to view the train. He describes it as comprising fifty-six pieces; viz., twenty-nine iron cannon, 6 to 18 pounders; thirteen brass cannon, 3 to 24 pounders; brass and iron mortars, cohorts, besides twenty-three hundred pounds of lead, and a barrel of flints.

It was a splendid enterprise, and elicited the warmest thanks of the commander, whose soul was revived and cheered when the cannon arrived.

EFFECTS OF CANNONADING.

In October, Washington wrote, as he had done several times in his letters, "Our advanced works and theirs are within musket-shot. We daily undergo a cannonade which we are obliged to submit to for want of powder. We therefore can do no more than keep them besieged, which they are as closely as any troops can be that have an opening to the sea." Gordon says, from the 17th of June to Christmas Day, the British had fired upwards of two thousand shot and shell, and had killed seven in Cambridge, and twelve in Roxbury, by this expenditure of ammunition. At one time, Washington's men occupied themselves in picking up the balls. The cannonading of Boston by the American army was just about as effective.

WASHINGTON WATCHING THE ICE.

In January (14th) Washington regretted his delay in making an attack upon Boston, and said, "Could I have foreseen the difficulties which have come upon us, . . . all the generals upon earth should not have convinced me of the propriety of delaying an attack upon Boston until this time." Owing to the peculiar formation of the territory, with only one land-entrance to the town, it was supposed the ice, when it should close the river, and cover the bays, might offer advantages for attacking the enemy to either party; and each commander took measures to provide against an attack in that direction. The fortifications at Cambridgeport and at Lechmere's Point might be advantageously used in case of a *sortie* from Boston, "when the bay gets froze;" and, in December, Washington took further measures to guard against "any approach on the ice."

Nevertheless, he looked upon the freezing as *his* opportunity. He wrote (Jan. 23), "No appearance yet of a bridge." And on the 1st of February, having revived from his despondency by a more favorable and improving condition of things, he said, "If we are furnished with the means, and *the weather will afford us a passage*, something must be attempted." He continued to watch the ice; and, on the 10th of February, he says, "The bay toward Roxbury has been frozen up once or twice, and, yesterday, single persons might have crossed from Lechmere's Point, by picking his way. A thaw, I fear, is again approaching." Such ice would certainly be little reliable for the transportation of an army; and it is a fortunate thing that it was never attempted.

X.—OCCUPATION OF DORCHESTER HEIGHTS.

DECISION OF THE COUNCIL.

ON the 16th of February, Washington had nearly nine thousand efficient men, and supposed Gen. Howe had about five thousand. The river and bays were still frozen,

and it seemed the opportunity for an attack before re-enforcements should arrive. Washington, therefore, put the question to the council, "Whether, part of Cambridge and Roxbury bays being frozen over, a general assault should not be made on Boston?" Gen. Ward opposed it, and said, "The attack must be made with a view of bringing on an engagement, or of driving the enemy out of Boston; and either end will be answered much better by possessing Dorchester Heights." Gen. Gates also opposed it; and the majority of the council were against it.

The proposition to possess Dorchester Heights was then agreed upon; and the whole business was left with Gen. Ward, assisted by Gens. Thomas and Spencer, and Quartermaster-General Mifflin, who had been for some time considering the movement, and gathering means and materials for the purpose, unknown to the commander-in-chief.

Gordon says, "Had they not practised such foresight, it is to be much doubted whether they could have been in sufficient forwardness." Every thing was carried on with the utmost expedition, so that the Heights might be occupied as soon as possible.

Washington was evidently disappointed with this result, and, Gordon says, "did not appear enough sensible of the importance of Dorchester Heights." His mind was fixed in favor of the assault over the ice, as shown by what he afterwards wrote: "But behold! though we had been waiting all the year for this formidable event, the enterprise was thought too dangerous. Perhaps it was. Perhaps the irksomeness of my situation led me to undertake more than could be warranted by prudence." He added, "I did not think so; but it is now at an end, and I am preparing to take post in Dorchester."

The danger of attempting to march an army over the ice, as proposed, with the risk of an engagement upon it, will be fully appreciated in these later times; and it must now be considered fortunate that Gen. Ward's suggestion was at once adopted, and the enterprise proposed by the

commander-in-chief not undertaken. The army at this time was provided with "forty-five batteaus, each to carry eighty men, and two floating-batteries;" and these were afterwards used to land Gen. Putnam and the first troops that entered Boston.

FIFTH OF MARCH.


It having been determined to occupy Dorchester Heights, a council was called on the 26th of February, to *fix the time* for the movement; and Quartermaster-General Mifflin, for the first time, was invited to the council, probably for the reason that he had been giving his attention to the subject.

Col. Mifflin came "prepossessed in favor of the night of the 4th of March; a friend having reminded him that probably the action would be the next day, and that it would have a wonderful effect upon the spirits of the New-Englanders to tell them, when about engaging, 'Remember the 5th of March, and revenge yourselves for the massacre at Boston.'"

Gates at once opposed the time, and so, probably, did others; but we venture to say it was not opposed by either Ward or Thomas, who were stationed at Roxbury. The proposition was carried by a bare *majority of one*. The preparations, which had been in progress for weeks, were hurried on to completion. So serious an action was expected, that the surgeons provided two thousand bandages for broken legs, arms, and wounds. The men, however, remained undaunted, and were strongly disposed to come to blows with the enemy.

CANNONADING THE TOWN.

The cannon from Ticonderoga had been mostly mounted; and on Saturday, the 2d of March, by order of the commander, a heavy cannonading was opened (as powder was now comparatively plenty) from Cobble Hill, Lechmere's Point, and Lamb's Dam, a formidable battery at Roxbury; and was continued, almost without intermission, through



that night, the next night (Sunday), and Monday; and on this last evening the expedition moved slowly and silently and grandly forward.

MOVEMENT ON THE HEIGHTS.

First came the covering party of eight hundred men; then carts with intrenching tools; then the working-body of twelve hundred men, under Gen. Thomas; then a train of more than three hundred carts loaded with fascines, hay, &c., in martial procession,—all moving so silently that the wagoners, without snapping a whip, “spoke to their cattle in a whispering note.” “Many of the carts make three or four trips; the men work with a will into the frozen ground; the night is remarkably mild; and by ten o'clock two forts are raised, one upon each hill. The work is continued until three o'clock on the morning of the 5th of March.”

When daylight made things visible, the troops, resting from their labors, could overlook Boston; and the proceedings in the town were watched with great interest. In the course of an hour or two, which seemed an age amidst the hurry and confusion which reigned, it finally appeared that a movement would be attempted.

Gen. Thomas occupied the time in completing and improving his works. Col. Mifflin's loaded barrels were all in place, ready to be let loose upon the ranks of the enemy, who should venture to face them. Washington visited the works, and encouraged the men by reminding them of the anniversary, as suggested by Col. Mifflin. Thus the day passed on, until the movements in Boston began to have a purpose which was soon understood.

WASHINGTON'S PLANS AND SIGNALS.

While Ward and Thomas and Mifflin were engaged in the preparation and completion of this great movement, which so suddenly brought the condition of things to a crisis, Gen. Washington had arranged a plan for entering the town, in case of a movement of the enemy against the

fortifications; which was almost certain to take place. Two divisions of the army, under Gens. Sullivan and Greene, the whole under Putnam, of two thousand men each, were to enter the town upon a signal from the Heights. They were to be transported in boats, and land on the west side of the town. Fortunately this movement was not necessary.

Notwithstanding this remarkable and important movement, the people of Boston did not omit their usual observance of the anniversary of the 5th of March. The oration was delivered by Rev. Peter Thatcher at Watertown.

XI.—MOVEMENTS IN BOSTON.

WHAT THE BRITISH COMMANDERS THOUGHT.

WHEN Gen. Howe saw the forts, according to Gordon, "he scratches his head, and is heard to say, 'I know not what I shall do. The rebels have done more in one night than my whole army would have done in one month.'" He thought there must have been twelve thousand men at work, instead of twelve hundred.

Admiral Shulldham soon informed Gen. Howe what he thought; and that was, if the Americans are allowed to possess those heights, he could not keep one of his Majesty's ships in the harbor.

Gen. Howe's remark was a compliment to the energy and efficiency of the Colonial troops, which their commanders did not bestow upon them, nor have the historians. Bancroft compliments the officers, however, when he says, "The British general found himself surpassed in military skill by officers whom he had pretended to despise." Military compliments are not often bestowed upon the common soldiers, who do the work.

ATTEMPT TO DISLodge THE PROVINCIALS.

Upon the call of a council of war, it was determined to make an attempt to dislodge the Provincials; and preparations were immediately commenced for the purpose, to take



TRYING TIMES IN BOSTON.

the next day. Of course, the troops could not go the Neck. As at Bunker Hill, the field of action must be reached by water; and it is reasonable to believe that another Bunker Hill engagement was expected both by the commander and his men.

Gen. Clinton was at Charlestown, and Lord Percy was to command the expedition. The whole day (5th) was occupied in coming to a decision, and embarking the troops. Twenty-four hundred men, it is said, were put on board the transports, and were to land at a point opposite the castle. The vessels dropped down to the rendezvous near by, in the evening, but soon realized a change of wind and weather, which made them not only uncomfortable, but unsafe. The storm, which had been indicated by preceding fog and winds, became very severe during the night; and before morning three of the vessels were driven ashore on Governor's Island. By this misadventure, the whole scheme was frustrated almost without the firing of a gun, and at once abandoned. From this instant, there was no longer an alternative for Gen. Howe to consider. Leaving or not leaving was no longer a matter of choice.

TRYING TIMES IN BOSTON.

Now ensued trying hours for Boston. No pen can describe the sufferings and apprehensions of the inhabitants remaining in the town, who had already endured so much. The town was literally between two fires, — liable to bombardment from the American army, and conflagration from the British army, and, at the same time, exposed to the threatened destruction by the fleet which was drawn up close to the wharves. The proposed assault upon the American works had been frustrated; but this did not relieve the town: the fear was, that a conflict in some form was inevitable. Boston, it seemed, must be destroyed; and whither should the people fly? The hours of apprehension were terrible to Tories as well as to the patriots, whose professions were to be put to the test.

The British troops had escaped another "Bunker Hill

affair," as they thought, and were content to wait for the next movement, whether it should be fighting or flying, knowing pretty well which it would be; and the part they would take in plundering and sacking the town, which would be sure to follow, was in their thoughts.

"NOVEL MODE OF DEFENCE."

One feature of defence on Dorchester Heights has been spoken of by various contemporary writers and historians as a "curious and novel mode of defence." It comprised "rows of barrels filled with earth, placed round the works." These appeared as if intended to strengthen the works; but the real design was, "in case the enemy made an attack, to have rolled them down the hill. They would have descended" [as the hills were steep, and clear of trees] "with such increasing velocity as must have thrown the assailants into the utmost confusion, and have killed and wounded great numbers." To show how effective this arrangement was, although never used, we quote the following English account from Stedman, who was attached to General Howe's staff:—

"No alternative now remained for the besieged, but to dislodge the Provincials from their new works, or evacuate the town. To succeed in the former was impossible; for the British troops must have ascended an almost perpendicular eminence, on the top of which the Americans had prepared hogsheads, chained together in great numbers, and filled with stones, to roll down upon them as they marched up; a curious provision, by which whole columns would have been swept off at once. This species of preparation will exemplify, in a striking manner, that fertility of genius in expedients, which strongly characterized the Americans during the war. This would effectually have destroyed all order, and have broken the ranks. It was, therefore, determined to evacuate the town."

"This project," Gen. Heath says, "was suggested by Mr. William Davis, merchant of Boston, to our general" [Gen. Heath], "who immediately communicated it to

the commander in chief, who highly approved of it, as did all the other officers ; but the credit of it is justly due to Mr. Davis ; and to him the writer gives it." The statement is magnanimous and honorable to Gen. Heath.

XII.—EVACUATION OF BOSTON AND CHARLESTOWN.

THE possible evacuation of Boston was distinctly suggested at Charlestown by Gen. Howe, in his address to the troops before the battle : —

"Remember, gentlemen," he said, "we have no recourse to any resources, if we lose Boston, but to go on board our ships, which will be very disagreeable to us all." He afterwards realized how disagreeable it was.

The same possibility was contemplated a little later by Lord Dartmouth himself, who wrote to Gen. Gage, —

"If we are driven to the difficulty of relinquishing Boston, . . . care must be taken, that the officers and friends of the government be not left exposed to the rage and insult of the rebels." They were provided for.

It was understood also, that Gage and Howe were, at an early day after the battle, in favor of leaving the town, when it could be done with safety.

EVACUATION DETERMINED UPON.

The truth is, it had been known and admitted by the British officers, for a long time, that no progress could be made towards subduing the rebellion in Boston — its home ; and either Gage or Howe would gladly have left it long before. Upon the fortunate frustration of the movement, on the 6th, Gen. Howe called a council of his officers ; and, after full discussion where there was little ground for a difference of opinion, it was determined to evacuate the town. This result soon became known ; and the report was current that the town would be burnt. Robbery and the flames were now almost certain.

The Tories were horror-struck and confounded by the decision of Gen. Howe. They had not contemplated such

a result so as to make it welcome: they had hoped and expected a triumph, and now their despair was crushing. They were not only defeated, but outlawed; not only outlawed, but exiled, for they could not remain in the town after the troops had left it.

MEASURES OF THE SELECTMEN.

The selectmen of the town were alive to its situation, and, as soon as they had information of Gen. Howe's design, obtained communication with him through Gen. Robertson. They gained such information as afforded a hope of saving the town, if they could convey it to Gen. Washington.

Gen. Robertson was authorized by the British commander to declare that he had "no intention of destroying the town, unless the troops under his command were molested, during their embarkation or at their departure, by the armed force without."

MESSAGE TO GEN. WASHINGTON, AND ANSWER.

This message was committed to writing by the selectmen (March 8), and, a flag of truce having been granted for the purpose, was sent to the Roxbury line and delivered to Col. Learned, who communicated it to Gen. Washington. The selectmen added to the message, "Our fears are quieted with regard to Gen. Howe's intentions. We beg we may have some assurance that so dreadful a calamity may not be brought on by any measure without."

As a testimony of the truth of the paper, four of the selectmen signed it, and it was carried out by three well-known townsmen; viz., Thomas and Jonathan Amory and Peter Johonot. The selectmen were John Scollay, Timothy Newell, Thomas Marshall and Samuel Austin. This document saved the town.

On the next day (9th), Col. Learned wrote to the selectmen that he had conveyed their message to Gen. Washington, and the answer received from him was to this effect: "That as it was an unauthenticated paper, without an



PILLAGING IN BOSTON.

address, and not obligatory upon Gen. Howe, he would take no notice of it."

OCCUPATION OF NOOK'S HILL.¹

Of course, Gen. Washington was desirous of saving the town; and without at all relaxing his hold of affairs, or neglecting further measures to secure his grand object, he strictly observed the condition proposed. There was, however, some heavy cannonading on this night from Boston, on account of a force sent to Nook's Hill to erect a battery, which would still more closely command the Neck, the Common, and the town. It is said that eight hundred shot were fired from the shipping, and not one returned. Five Americans were killed, and the work suspended. But for this, the final triumph would have been bloodless. It was a fearful night in the town.



PILLAGING IN BOSTON.

From the 9th to the 16th, Boston was exposed by authority and against authority, to pillage, robbery, and destruction, almost without restraint, from officers, soldiers, marines, and sailors; and the utmost confusion and hurry prevailed throughout the town. The Tories were active in securing their property; the officers of the army, in trying to sell their furniture; the towns-people and traders, trying to protect what property they had left, and their houses from pillage and destruction. Property was not only stolen, but what could not be carried away was destroyed. Houses were broken into in the night, carousals carried on in the parlors, the chinaware broken, and every portable thing removed. After the soldiers had had their chance, wholly regardless of the orders issued by Gen. Howe against thieving, the sailors came on shore, and, pretending to have authority for their conduct, commenced pillaging from stores and houses every thing that could be taken away which the soldiers had left.

The *official* robbery was performed by a notorious and

¹ Nook's Hill is in South Boston, not far from the Church of St. Paul and St. Peter, on Broadway.

pretentious New York Tory, Crean Brush, at the head of a gang of soldiers or Tories, who acted under Gen. Howe's orders in seizing large quantities of goods, which, "if in possession of the rebels, would enable them to carry on war." Crean Brush obeyed his orders thoroughly and maliciously, entering and robbing the stores or houses indiscriminately, under the broadest interpretation of his orders. The proceeding was so indefensible in itself, to say nothing of the agent selected, as to throw some doubt on the sincerity of Gen. Howe's professions in other respects, for he left behind him, belonging to the king, warlike stores and supplies, which Washington estimated at thirty thousand pounds. Besides which Crean Brush himself, and the goods he had taken, were captured on board the brigantine "Elizabeth," and never served the British army.

For two or three days (14th), the streets were barricaded in different parts of the town; and on the 15th the town-crier notified the inhabitants to keep their houses "from eleven o'clock in the morning till night, lest they should annoy the troops in their intended embarkation."

Gen. Howe sent for the selectmen on the 15th, and informed them of the preparations he had made to burn the town, if molested; and also said, that he thought it his duty to destroy much of the property in the town to prevent it being useful to the rebel army. The wind proving unfavorable, the troops returned to their quarters. Several houses were burnt; but the night was tolerably quiet.

THE EMBARKATION.

The night of the 16th brought an end to the depredations in Boston, but was another alarm to the people by the renewal of the bombardment upon Nook's Hill, where the Americans had succeeded in establishing the battery, which commanded the town and the camp; but the men were not dislodged, nor was a shot returned. "In consequence of it," Gordon says, "they began to embark at four o'clock in the morning, and were all on board and

under sail before ten," — the entire garrisons of Boston and Charlestown. At Charlestown, as there was no plundering for the soldiers to do amidst the ruins of the town, the troops on Bunker Hill amused themselves by placing wooden sentries upon the walls of the fort; but these did not long deceive anybody.

Thus on the 17th of March was accomplished by the British commander a most difficult, perilous, and mortifying undertaking; and it may well be left to the imagination of the reader to conceive the height of chagrin and disappointment of Gen. Howe, not so much at leaving Boston, as in the manner of it, which was disgusting even in its necessity, he having so recently expressed entire confidence in his safety. There was no help for it. The cannon, which had cost England, as said, so many millions of dollars to transport and protect at Ticonderoga, and which the gallant Col. Henry Knox had so successfully transported three or four hundred miles in mid-winter, together with the supplies obtained from the "Nancy," also paid for by the British Government, had accomplished the work against their owners; and Gen. Howe, it may be said, was defeated with his own weapons, in the hands of men, whom, as military officers, he had affected to despise.

"Thus," says Mr. Newell (one of the selectmen), in his diary, "was this distressed town relieved of a set of men, whose unparalleled wickedness, profanity, debauchery, and cruelty, is inexpressible, enduring a siege from the 19th of April, 1775, to the 17th of March, 1776."

"Thus," says Stedman, "was the capital of Massachusetts added to the American cause." Rather was it wrested from the grasp of the English ministry, and restored to the American cause, which it represented.

TIME AND METHOD — THE TORIES.

Stedman says the evacuation of Boston "required a fortnight to carry it into execution, on account of the numbers to be removed, many of whom were sick and wounded." It would have taken longer, if Washington

had not occupied Nook's Mill. First the horses and hay, stores, furniture, arms, ammunition, fuel, &c., were put on board the ships and transports, with all the stealings that could be got on board. After these, somewhat promiscuously, followed soldiers, grenadiers, officers, women, children, and "the loyalists," — in all, probably, thirteen or fourteen thousand persons. The ships dropped down the harbor to President's Roads, below the Castle, where they remained for ten days more, when most of them had sailed for Halifax, where they fared worse than they had in Boston. In a letter written from the lower harbor, the writer said, "neither Hell, Hull, or Halifax could afford worse shelter than Boston." But he was disappointed. The fugitives, from all accounts, had a very uncomfortable time while on shipboard, and fared badly and suffered terribly at Halifax. Of the Tories, nine hundred and twenty-four entered their names at Halifax, including eighteen clergymen and about two hundred who did not return their names.

XIII.—OCCUPATION OF BOSTON.

ENTRANCE OF THE TROOPS.

SUNDAY, the seventeenth day of March, 1776, was a day of unfeigned relief to Boston. The troops had left the town; the ships, the harbor; and that threatening ship, "Fowey," which lay near the end of Long Wharf, and Howe said was prepared with shells and carcasses to set the town on fire, "if the troops met with any obstructions," had disappeared. On this day, to the great joy of the people, Col. Learned unbarred the gates at the Neck for his troops, and marched into the town; while Gen. Putnam, with his troops from Cambridge in boats, entered it on the west side.

CONDITION OF THE TOWN.

The soldiers found the streets encumbered with fascines, barricades, hogsheads filled from the stables, limbs of trees, and crow's-feet, the houses deserted and shattered,



confusion and destruction everywhere. Fires were discovered in various places; and shells were found with trains of powder leading to them; or, at least, these things are reported.

There was still much sickness in the town, as the small-pox had prevailed so long; and measures were immediately taken to have the place thoroughly cleansed. Not only the houses, the streets, the common, but the docks, into which every description of thing had been thrown, had to be cleaned. Washington did not allow the inhabitants to enter the town without a pass until the selectmen should report it "cleansed from infection."

On the 18th, as we infer from Washington's letter of the next day to Mr. Reed, he made his first visit into the town,¹ and on the same day despatched Gen. Heath, with the riflemen and five of his best regiments, to New York, saying, "I cannot spare more whilst the fleet hover in our harbor."

Washington visited many of the most prominent places in the town, and among these the Common, Fort Hill, and the works at the Neck, the Old South Church, Faneuil Hall, the Province House, the Hancock House, and other points; but he still retained his quarters at Cambridge, where all his letters are dated.

There was more or less firing of cannon somewhere in the neighborhood on the 17th; but on the 18th the report of a gun is not mentioned by contemporary writers. On the 19th, there was cannonading between the Castle and Dorchester Point, but to no effect.

On the 19th, Washington wrote to Congress, that the town had not suffered as much as he expected. But Mr. Price says, "It gave me much pain to see the havoc, waste, and destruction of the houses, fences, and trees," and adds,

¹ Washington was three times in Boston: — in 1756, to consult Gov. Shirley on a question of military precedence; in 1775, as herein related; and again in 1789, as President of the United States, when there was the greatest procession of the people, trades, and professions, and display by the children of the public schools, ever seen at that time in Boston.



"Great numbers of buildings are wholly down, a great number of others mostly destroyed." The estates of the refugees, of course, were in the best condition, and were afterwards confiscated to the public use.

Bad as was the condition of things in Boston at this time, yet with her harbor soon to be opened to commerce, with the large supplies left by the British army, with the numerous captures of storeships and traders (and among these, singularly enough, Crean Brush, with all his stealings), the town was ready to begin a new career of peace and prosperity; but the people of the neighboring town of Charlestown (who had been partially sustained by one-seventh of the donations to Boston) felt themselves to be homeless and houseless. They were scattered, the poor distributed among the towns in the county of Worcester; and, save the barracks in the garrison, there was not a building in the town.

ENTRANCE OF THE ARMY.

On the 20th, the main army entered the town, under command of Gen. Washington; and it is presumed he was at the head of it, though we can find no reliable mention of the fact. They were everywhere received with joyous greetings by the people, and at once occupied the forts and defences of the town. They soon found enough to do. Some of the returning inhabitants, who were near, got in with the soldiers and received a hearty welcome: a lively joy was manifested by all at their liberation.

On the 21st, Washington issued a proclamation, calling upon the people to assist in the preservation of peace and good order, and to make known "all stores belonging to the ministerial army," and on the same day addressed a letter to the legislature concerning the building of the fort on Fort Hill, the demolition of the defences at the Neck, the preservation of the stores left by the British army for Continental use, the necessary defences for the harbor, the property in Boston belonging to the refugees, the pay of the field-officers of the Massachusetts regiments, and other matters.

On the 22d, the people returned to the town in crowds, and there were many happy meetings. On the 23d, the Castle (which the British had burned) was visited, and the cannon found to be spiked, and trunnions broken off.

On the 24th, Washington again wrote to Congress, giving further information, and saying that he was having a large and strong work thrown up on Fort Hill, which would command the whole harbor.

As late as the 25th, Washington was still under some apprehensions of a return of the enemy. "The enemy have the best knack at puzzling people I ever met with in my life." He suggested that they might land at Roxbury, and get in behind his lines.

On the 27th, he wrote again to Congress, announcing the sailing of the fleet from the Roads, and that he should detach another brigade of six regiments to New York the next day, under Gen. Sullivan. On the 28th, he attended the re-establishment of the Thursday lecture, when a discourse was delivered by Dr. Eliot, from the text commencing, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities," &c. ; and a dinner was provided for his Excellency.

On the 29th, Washington was addressed jointly by the Council and House of Representatives, in a very respectful and proper manner; and Gordon says his reply was "moderate, and becoming his situation." He was also addressed and complimented by the selectmen of the town, and said in reply, "Your virtuous efforts in the cause of freedom, and the uparalleled fortitude with which you have sustained the greatest of all human calamities, justly entitle you to the grateful remembrance of your American brethren."

Somebody asked him if he had ever said that he knew no music so pleasing as the whistling of bullets. He replied, "If I said so, it was when I was young," thus intimating *his* susceptibility of danger.

On the 29th, also, he communicated his instructions to Gen. Putnam in regard to the defence of New York.

"The enemy," he wrote to his brother on the 31st, "left all their works standing in Boston and on Bunker's Hill; and formidable they are." Of himself and his relations to the people of Boston and the province, he says, —

"I am happy to find, and to hear from different quarters, that my reputation stands fair." "The addresses . . . from the General Court of the colony, and from the selectmen of Boston, upon the evacuation of the town and my approaching departure from the colony, exhibit a pleasing testimony of their approbation of my conduct, and of their personal regard," &c.

On the 4th of April, which is the date of the last letter of Washington from Cambridge, he dined in Boston; and the remainder of the troops, excepting five regiments under Gen. Ward, left for the south on the same day. Washington arrived in New York on the 13th of April, a few days before the troops; and Mrs. Washington reached there on the 17th. Howe was safely at Halifax, and left there on the 10th of June, and was off Sandy Hook about the 30th.

It seems, from what has been said, that the occupation of Dorchester Heights was distinctly a Massachusetts movement, adopted against a counter-proposition of Gen. Washington; that the time selected for the enterprise, the memorable "Fifth of March," was that suggested by a friend of Col. Mifflin in Boston; and that the ingenious expedient "by which whole columns would have been swept off at once," and which made it impossible for Gen. Howe to dislodge the Provincials, and left him no alternative but "to evacuate the town," was the suggestion of a Boston merchant. History, it may be added, has not heretofore done justice to Massachusetts in these respects. The credit of all these measures, as is generally the case, inured to the commander-in-chief, although adopted, as the principal measure here was, against his judgment. Washington, however, recognized his army.

WARLIKE STORES LEFT IN BOSTON.

There are full accounts of the property, warlike stores, supplies, ammunition, &c., left in Boston by Gen. Howe, chiefly for the reason that he had not means to transport them. Among them were two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, twenty-five hundred chaldrons of English coal (for some of which fifty dollars a chaldron had been offered by the inhabitants), twenty-five thousand bushels of wheat, three thousand of barley and oats, one hundred and fifty horses, several vessels with cargoes, more than seven hundred hogsheads of salt, thousands of blankets, quantities of flour, bread, beans, beef, hay, &c.

Every vessel which they did not carry off they rendered unfit for use ; some, with cargoes on board, were sunk in the docks. Not a boat was left to cross the river.

ACTION OF CONGRESS.

The news of the evacuation reached Congress on the 25th, and votes of thanks on motion of John Adams, "to Washington and the officers and soldiers under his command," were unanimously passed by that body and it was also ordered a gold medal be struck, and presented to Washington. The medal was struck in Paris, and bears on the obverse a head of Washington in profile, with the inscription around it as follows : —

GEORGIO WASHINGTON SUPREMO DVCI EXERCITVVM ADSECTORI
LIBERTATIS,

and underneath, —

COMITIA AMERICANA.

On the reverse are Washington with his officers on horseback, the troops marching in column, a portion of the fortifications and mounted cannon, cannon not yet mounted, cannon-balls beside them, the town in the distance, the harbor, the ships under full sail, towards which the arm of Washington is extended, — a very comprehensive sketch. Around is inscribed : —

HOSTIBUS PRIMO FUGATIS,

and beneath

BOSTONIUM RECUPERATUM XVII MARTII MDCCLXXVI.

RE-ERECTION OF THE BEACON.

One of the prominent acts of the selectmen, after the evacuation, was the re-erection of the BEACON on Sentry Hill, as it was first called. When Gage built his fort on the hill, he had the famous pole cut down. When Howe left, the selectmen restored it, and it remained there during the war. It was blown down in a heavy gale, Nov. 26, 1789, just a month after the visit of President Washington. Beacon-Hill Monument was built the next year.

XIV.—THE WORK DONE AND ITS LESSON.

END OF THE WAR IN MASSACHUSETTS.

THE evacuation of Boston was not merely a retreat, or "flight," of the British army and royal navy: it was also a defeat of the Ministry and Parliament and King, and THE END OF THE WAR IN MASSACHUSETTS. Failing to command obedience, or enforce any of their unjust acts; failing to punish the rebels and ringleaders, as they called the people; failing to starve them into submission, or bribe them with offices and honors, and finally failing to conquer them in war, with all the power of the king, — they found their army expelled from the town it had fortified, and their fleet from the port it had blockaded, leaving cannon, shipping, supplies, and even provisions behind them.

Washington, Ward, Putnam, Thomas, Sullivan, Spencer, and their associates in arms, had done their work, and Boston was again, for the second time, relieved of the presence of a British army. Gage and Howe, Burgoyne and Clinton, Percy and Pigot, like Hutchinson and Bernard, and the usurper Andros before them, had learned how unwisely and ignorantly they had underrated the character, physically and intellectually, of the American people. Humiliating as the lesson was to them, the king, ministry, and parliament, alike ignorant and prejudiced, were alike chagrined and confounded. Disobeyed and maddened,

they had determined with the whole power of the kingdom, aided by savages and mercenaries,¹ to punish and crush the rebels ; but all this was of as little avail as their former efforts, and resulted even more disastrously.

The occupation of Dorchester Heights, which brought about this result, was contemplated by both parties at the time of the movement to Bunker Hill, before the arrival of Gen. Washington. It was hardly possible, however, for the British commander, at any time, with the force in hand, to have held them, and especially not after the division of his garrison between Boston and Charlestown. If Lord Percy could have dislodged the Provincials, his force could not have held the position, and the Americans would soon have returned. Both positions were clearly essential to the security of the British army in Boston ; and it is equally clear that both could not have been held with the amount of force in the town.

America, it would seem, was destined, not to say determined, to be a free country, and the Americans a free people. No one of the unjust measures taken or attempted against them, or the more cruel ones that followed, met with any favor, or commanded any success. Every act of parliament, from first to last, was especially damaging to British commerce, British manufactures, and the trade of the English people, to say nothing of the character of the British nation, and the final loss of the colonies.

So in the war which the ministry and the king waged against this colony. They failed as utterly in military enterprise as they had done in the endeavor to enforce oppressive and unjust laws upon the people. They failed at Salem ; they failed at Concord ; and they paid dearly for success at Bunker Hill. They did get some powder from the Provincial magazine at Quarry Hill ; but their great achievements were the burning of Charlestown and Fal-

¹ The first division of Hessians, previously contracted for, were sent from "St. Helens," in May, 1776 ; and at the same time Lord Howe and Gen. Howe were constituted commissioners for restoring peace to the colonies, *granting pardons, &c.*

mouth (Portland), and the elaborate and costly works of defence which they abandoned.

The forced evacuation of Boston was indeed a bitter conclusion to all that had been threatened and attempted, and bitterly was it felt in England, by king, ministry, parliament, and people. It was a rebuke which the kingdom felt, and the civilized world recognized. In one of Wilke's speeches the next year (November, 1777), he referred to the fact of Howe's being ignominiously cooped up in Boston for so many months, and at last driven from thence. "I have been nauseated," he said, "with the cant terms of our generals changing quarters; but I know likewise that their artillery and stores were left behind them;" and added, Howe's retreat from Boston "was an absolute flight, as much so as that of Mahomet from Mecca."

Lord Manchester, in the British parliament, referring to the evacuation, said, "British generals, whose names never met with a blot of dishonor, are forced to quit that town which was the first object of the war, the immediate cause of hostilities, the place of arms, which has cost this nation more than a million to defend." [The appropriation granted by parliament for "extraordinary expenses" from March of the preceding year to the end of January, was £845,000 or about £100 per man in the garrison at Boston, within less than a year.]

After the evacuation of Boston, war was commenced against the other colonies, whose offence was that they had given their support to New England; but the great event which followed on the 4th of July, three and a half months after the evacuation of Boston, was the
DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

PRE-REVOLUTIONARY PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN BOSTON.

IN 1787, after the war, the chief public buildings in Boston, were : 3 churches, 13 meeting-houses, governor's palace (Province house), court-house (old State house), Faneuil Hall, work-house, bridewell, granary, "and a wharf, at least half a mile long." The buildings were said to be more elegant than those in Pennsylvania or New York ; the arts "forwarder," and a "more general turn for music, painting and belles lettres."

THE PROVINCE HOUSE.

The Province House, (or rather perhaps some of its walls and windows), is undoubtedly the oldest private building now remaining in Boston ; and this, as well as the more public edifices, belongs to the Colonial period, having been built by a private citizen in 1679. Hawthorne, in "Twice Told Tales," says :— "These letters and figures — 16 P. S. 79 — are wrought into the iron-work of the balcony," and indicate the builder's name, Peter Sargeant, who died in 1713.

The south wall, and the large windows, now screened with wire netting, may be seen, in passing from Washington street through the arch-way to Province Court, entering at a point a little south of the Old South. It was of brick, set back from the street, front yard, handsome iron fence ; it was three stories high, balcony in front, cupola, and an Indian chief with drawn bow and arrow for its weather vane. There were two stately oak trees in the front yard, on the lawn, and a flight of massive stone steps up to the porch. In 1715, it was bought of Sar-

gent's heirs by the General Court, for the use of the Colonial governors, and was used by them down to the time of Gens. Gage and Howe. It was sold and recovered, and finally in 1811, was granted to the Mass. General Hospital, and then leased to David Greenough, for the term of 99 years, for the full paid sum of \$33,000. Since then it has been occupied as a hotel, place of amusement by the negro minstrels, has been partially destroyed by fire, and is now thoroughly walled up with the adjoining buildings—the ninety-nine years' lease having saved what there is left of it. It was for many years—in colonial, provincial and revolutionary times—the centre of official authority and of political, social and fashionable life.

THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH.



THIS was the third congregational church, and like the first, was formed at Charlestown, in May, 1669, Thomas Thatcher, pastor. It was called New South until another house was built still farther south. The first building, after much opposition, was on land given by Mrs. John Norton, widow of the late pastor of the first church, in accordance with his will. It was built of cedar, with steeple and galleries. The Election Sermon, in 1712, was preached in this house for the first time, by Rev.

Mr. Cheever. In 1729, it was taken down and the present brick house erected. Willard, Pemberton, Sewall and Prince, followed Thatcher as pastors.

This edifice is eminently historic and memorable, the compeer of Faneuil Hall and the Old State House, for here town meetings were held and orations pronounced by the patriots of the revolution; here the acts of parliament were discussed and the tea question determined; here the ablest preachers of the time held forth, and finally, here for nearly six months before evacuation, the British dragoons exercised themselves and amused the crowd with their horsemanship. Long prior to this, in 1667-8, under the usurper Andros, the house was taken for the Episcopalians to "say their prayers in," before the first King's Chapel was built. It is much to be feared that this memorable edifice — memorable in so many ways to history — will soon fall a prey to public improvements of the most practical character.

THE LATE HANCOCK HOUSE.



THE Hancock House, as seen in the engraving, was built by Thomas Hancock, merchant, in 1737, with stone from Braintree, and was occupied by him until August 1764; after his death, by his widow, Lydia Hancock, (*née* Henchman,) who died in 1777. The statement generally is that the uncle left his elegant

estate to his nephew, John Hancock; but this is not true: Thomas Hancock left the house and the whole establishment, horses, carriages, servants, &c., to his widow by will; and at her decease she gave the whole to her nephew, John Hancock.

Hancock occupied the house in 1775, before the death of his aunt, while Gage was in Boston, for some time. Gage permitted Lord Percy afterwards to occupy the house to the exclusion of Madame Hancock. It was for many years after the evacuation the centre of social life and generous hospitality, and many

distinguished visitors passed its threshold while it was occupied by the Governor. In 1859, the legislature entertained a proposition to purchase the house in order to its preservation; but the movement failed; it fell into the hands of private parties and gave place to private dwellings in 1863-4.

THE OLD STATE HOUSE.



THE Old State House was the successor of the first Town House, which except the meeting-house, was probably the first public building erected on the peninsula. Just as Faneuil Hall was the "*Cradle of Liberty*" was the Old State House the place where "*Independence was born.*" The first Town

House was erected in 1657, partly by a legacy left for the purpose by Capt. Keayne, first commander of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery. It was of wood and was burned in 1711; rebuilt in 1712, of brick, and burned again, with its records and documents, in 1747. The present edifice, 110 feet by 38, was built in 1748, and was used by the Great and General Court for half a century, and for other State and County purposes. Gen. Gage, like his predecessors, was received here and his commission read, before proceeding to Faneuil Hall; and here John Hancock, — the next Governor, — was brought and made a brief address to the House of Representatives, 18th Sept. 1793, a few days before his death. Here upon its balcony, President Washington presented himself to the people in 1789.

In 1743, the town meetings were transferred to Faneuil Hall, and in 1830, under the city charter, this building was adopted and known as the City Hall. On its occupation, 17th of September, an eloquent address was delivered by the Mayor, Harrison Gray Otis. He said of it, "Yet it is a goodly and venera-

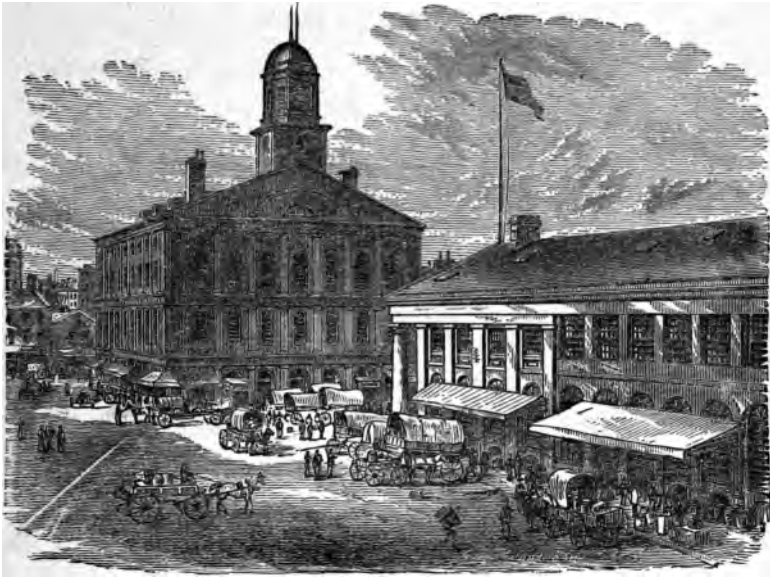
ble pile ; and, with its recent improvements, is an ornament of the place, *of whose liberty it was once the citadel.*" "It has an interest for Bostonians, * * * Nor is there on the face of the earth, another building, however venerable for its antiquity or stately in its magnificence, however decorated by columns and porticos, * * * entitled to more honorable mention, or whose spires and turrets are surrounded with a more glorious halo, than this unpretending building." It was used as the City Hall until 1840.

The building has been used as a post-office, and was at one time partially occupied by the masonic fraternity. It is now improved for general business purposes and offices by a large number of tenants.

May it long remain as a memorial of the early history of the town and the colony, as it represents both. As an edifice it is fifteen years older than Faneuil Hall.

"KING'S CHAPEL,' NOW STONE CHAPEL.

The present Stone Chapel, (so named after the Evacuation.) was one of the first stone buildings in Boston. King's Chapel was built of wood in 1688, nearly a century before the revolution. It was enlarged in 1710, and was wholly rebuilt as it now stands, in 1749, of boulder granite from the neighborhood of Quincy, twelve years after the building of the Hancock house of stone. It appears very prominently in Paul Revere's *View of Boston*, in 1770. Some additions have since been made to the edifice, and the portico was completed in 1780. During the revolutionary war in Massachusetts, it was attended by the British officers and their families, was in fact the fashionable church of the time, and of course escaped the ill usage visited upon the meeting-houses of other denominations. Its rectors and other ecclesiastics of the several churches, with most of their congregations, went off to Halifax with Gen. Howe and the tories. The first meetings of the Episcopalians were held in private houses, then in the town-house and the Old South.

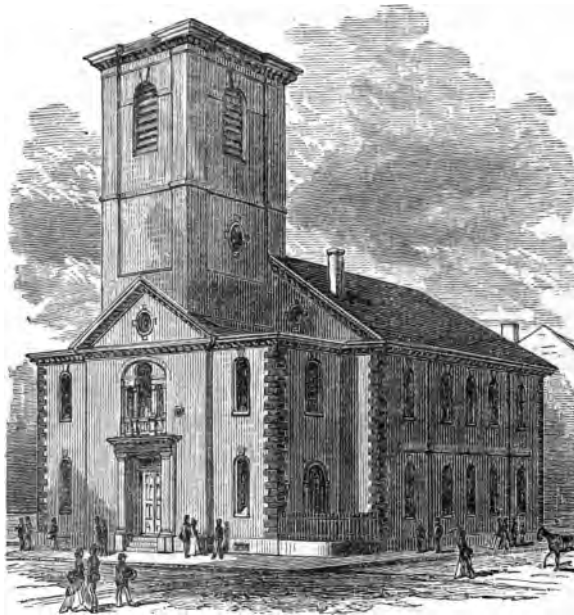


“THE CRADLE OF LIBERTY.”

The most memorable building in Boston, and widest known, is Faneuil Hall, originally the gift of Peter Faneuil, in 1740-2, when it was built. Its first use for a public address was on the 14th of March, 1743, an eulogium upon the donor. The building was of brick and was destroyed by fire in January, 1761; rebuilt by the aid of a State lottery and dedicated, also on the 14th of March 1763, address by James Otis. It was illuminated on the repeal of the Stamp Act; and in 1768, was occupied for one night by a regiment of British troops.

There was so much opposition to a market-house, instead of having the market-men go round to the houses, that Mr. Faneuil's offer was accepted by a vote of 367 to 360; but he was afterwards warmly thanked for the gift, especially because of its spacious and beautiful town hall — the “Cradle of Liberty.”

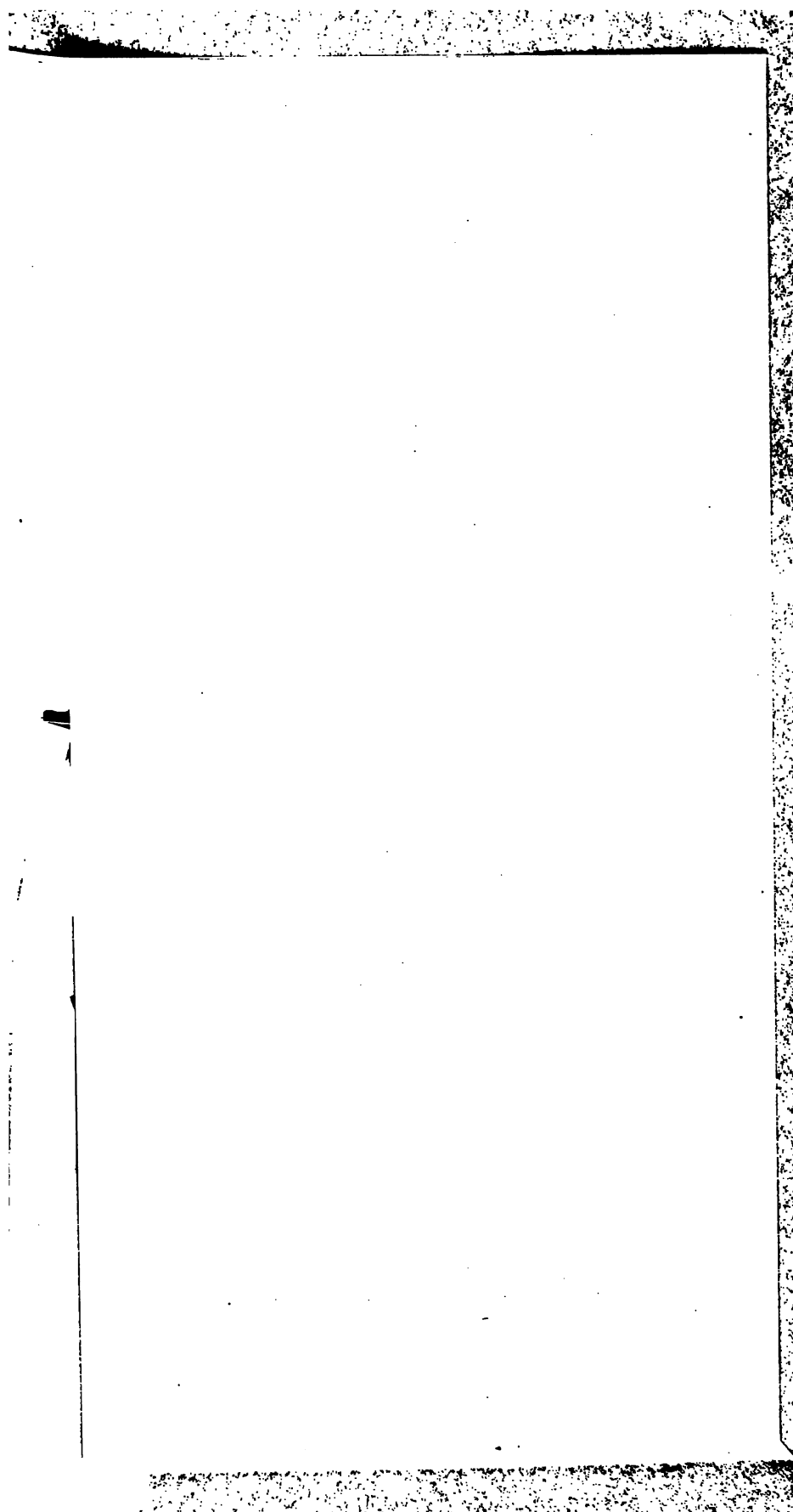
The rebuilt edifice had its steeple in the centre of the house, but when enlarged in 1806, to eighty feet in width, a third story was added and the steeple, with its grasshopper, placed at the easterly end. It was used as a town house for more than eighty years and on patriotic and public occasions, in colonial and revolutionary times, as in fact, it is now.



THE LATE BRATTLE SQUARE CHURCH.

THE first church in Brattle Square was erected in 1699 ; taken down in 1772 ; the late church was erected in 1773, (dedicated 25th July), and taken down one hundred years after, in 1872-3. It was known for a time as the "Manifesto Church," on account of its liberal distinctions in church matters, and its first minister, Mr. Coleman, was ordained in London. During the revolutionary war it was a patriot-church, and its pastor, Dr. Cooper, was obliged to leave the town, and the 29th regiment used the building as their barracks — which was quite as gross a desecration as though it had been used by the dragoons with their horses. John Hancock gave the bell and £1000 to the church at the time of re-building.

The church and society have always held a prominent position among the religious societies of Boston. Its pastors have been Dr. Coleman, the Coopers, father and son, Thatcher, Dr. Buckminster, Edward Everett, Dr. Palfrey, and Dr. Lathrop, the present pastor of the new church on Commonwealth Avenue.





PRE-REVOLUTIONARY BUILDINGS IN BOSTON. WHEN BUILT.

Province House	1679
Old South, 1669; present edifice	1729
Hancock House	1737
Old State House, 1657; present edifice	1748
King's Chapel, 1688; present edifice	1749
Faneuil Hall, 1742; present edifice	1763
Brattle Square Church, 1699; late edifice	1773

"My heart bled for the poor people of Boston, imprisoned within the walls of the city by a British army, and we know not to what plunders or massacres or cruelties they might be exposed." [John Adams, May 1775.]

"I should advise persisting in our struggle for liberty though it was revealed from Heaven that nine hundred and ninety-nine were to perish and only one in a thousand to survive and retain his liberty." [Sam Adams, Oct. 1774.]

NOVEL DEFENCE ON DORCHESTER HEIGHTS.

A gentleman in Texas writes to us, that, when a pupil in the Philadelphia High School, the Rev. Oliver A. Shaw, professor of elocution, related to his class, that "when a boy, living at Cambridge, I used to walk out with my grandfather, who was a Bunker Hill hero, and would show me the historic spots, and relate their stories." Speaking of Dorchester Heights, he stated some particulars in regard to this ingenious device not heretofore recorded: "Twenty-five hogsheads, filled with earth and stones, were placed on the brow of the hill, and each secured by a single stake driven in front, in such manner, that, as soon as it was removed, the hogshead would begin to roll down. One man [and the relater says his grandfather was one of them] was placed at each hogshead. When the red-coats were halfway up the hill, the stakes were to be drawn, and each man to give his hogshead a kick, and start it forward, and then run for the fort." The hogsheads were not rolled down the hill, but, it seems, accomplished their purpose, as no army (according to Stedman) could have gone up in face of them. [See page 43.]

REVOLUTIONARY FARMHOUSE IN SOMERVILLE.

THE remains of a fine old revolutionary farmhouse still remain in Somerville, on the line of the Fitchburg Railroad, nearly opposite the Tube Works. It is on a rise of ground which overlooked the marshes of Cambridge and East Cambridge, to the river, and commanded the west part of Boston. The location is about half a mile in the rear of Cobble Hill, and a short distance westerly of Prospect Hill. It was the site of redoubt No. 5, on the Plan of Fortifications.

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Mr. Blackstone's house.
Map of Boston for 1722.
First Church in Boston.
Birthplace of Benjamin Franklin.
The Old State House.
View of Dorchester Heights.
Copp's Hill Burying-Ground.

The Old Elm.
The Old Hancock House.
Old South Church.
King's Chapel.
The Warren House.
Bunker Hill Monument.
The Washington Elm, Cambridge.

Boston Courier.

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Boston Gazette.

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